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ABSTRACT

The essays in this book explore the balance between the communal and the individual aspects in the development of human beings and relates theories of education and learning to this development. In the introduction, Peter J. Sheehan offers a critical discussion of the ideas presented in the text. Part I contains two chapters on values and methodology in educational research and the relevance of philosophy to educational theory. In Part II, two chapters present an argument against setting up normative theories that interpret the role of the school in a utilitarian way and evaluate autonomy as the aim of liberal education. The chapters in Part III deal with the objectives approach in integrated studies and curriculum evaluation methods. The process of moral reasoning is the subject of Part IV. In Part V, one chapter examines educational values in the determination of the school's role in social reforms, and the other explores the relationship between equality as a social ideal and its practice in education. Each chapter is followed by a list of references. (FG)

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Studies in the Philosophical and Social Foundations of Education
Edited by J.V. D'Cruz and P.J. Sheehan.

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EDUCATION FOR RATIONAL UNDERSTANDING

Philosophical Perspectives on the Study and Practice of Education

Brian Crittenden

Australian Council for Educational Research

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Acknowledgments

When I was invited to submit a selection of my writings to be considered for publication, it was suggested that it should reflect the range of topics on which I have written and that it might include some material from work of mine not readily available in Australia. With the exception of Chapter 2, the essays in this collection have been written over the past eight years. Chapters 1, 2, 5, and 8 have not been published in any form previously. The second chapter was written in 1969 and revised in many details for this book.

I am grateful to the authors, editors, and publishers indicated below for their kind permission to reproduce the other chapters. Minor revisions have been made to a number of these chapters; the fourth is an enlarged version of the one previously published.

Chapter 3: Crittenden, B.S. and D'Cruz, J.V. (Eds). *Essays on Quality in Education.* Melbourne: Primary Education (Publishing), 1976, 1-16. (First published in *Twentieth Century,* Summer 1975)
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Two of the chapters, 5 and 8, were written during study leave in 1978, and some of the work in preparing the manuscript was done during this time. I am grateful to La Trobe University for this opportunity. I am also grateful for the assistance of secretarial staff at the university; in this regard I should mention especially Debbie Congues and Sue Bullen who very efficiently typed the manuscript.

I wish to thank Vin D'Cruz and Peter Sheehan for their encouragement. I am further indebted to Peter Sheehan for the critical introduction he has written for this book. It effectively highlights key themes that have occupied my attention in the chapters of the book and elsewhere. While dealing gently with the defects, it makes clear the issues on which the discussion needs to be carried much further.

There are two human inventions which may be considered more difficult than any others – the art of government, and the art of education; and people still contend as to their very meaning.

The prospect of a theory of education is a glorious ideal, and it matters little if we are not able to realize it at once.

Immanuel Kant, *Education*.

Introduction: The Philosopher and the Diversity of Educational Issues

Peter J. Sheehan

One of the many ways in which education has a unique role in the lives of thinking beings is that all aspects of life and all avenues of thought impinge on it in one way or another. The individuals who are to be educated are enormously complex and various, as are the areas in which they might be educated. These facts constitute the challenge and the difficulty of educational theory—the diversity of the educational reality threatens, at one extreme, a simplistic theoretical approach which stresses unity of theory at the cost of an inadequate attention to complexity or, at the other extreme, the breakdown of the study of education into numerous unrelated investigations. Crittenden's existing body of writings shows an awareness of these dangers. While writing in general terms about the nature and value of education, he is acutely conscious of the diversity of educational issues and covers an impressively wide range of these issues.

This characteristic of Crittenden's work means that any introduction to his writings, or to the selection of his writings included in the volume, must inevitably be selective. Thus in this introduction I discuss Crittenden's views in four of the five areas in which he has grouped his selected writings. Firstly, analytical issues about the study of education are taken up (Part I); secondly, I consider Crittenden's general views about the nature of education (Part II); thirdly, issues about the teaching of morality are discussed (Part IV); while my fourth section considers Crittenden's views about one area in which social values are intertwined with the practice of education, namely issues about equality and education (Part V). My only justification for not looking at the other area Crittenden himself has chosen, other than my own lack of knowledge in this area, would be the inevitably selective nature of any introduction. Given the diversity of educational issues, there remain important aspects of Crittenden's writings which are covered neither by this selection nor by this introduction. As I have conceived my task as offering a critical introduction to some key issues in his work, I have not hesitated to draw on those of Crittenden's writings which are not included in this volume.

The Study of Education

From its origins, philosophy has been closely engaged with educational issues and indeed some philosophers, ranging from Plato to John Dewey, have centred their writing on questions arising out of education. Nevertheless philosophers have taken up a wide range of positions about the way in which philosophy and educational issues are related. One of the most impressive characteristics of the work of Brian Crittenden is the attention it gives to reflection on the role of philosophy in relation to educational theory and practice, and the way in which his own studies can be seen to flow from his views of the role of philosophical inquiry. Crittenden's position here thus provides a useful point of entry for this survey of some of the key aspects of his work.

To understand Crittenden's view of the role of philosophical inquiry, we must start from his distinction between educational theory and policy and the philosophy of education.[1] 'Educational theory and policy' is the term used to refer to the overall human enterprise of attempting to think systematically about all aspects of the nature, process, and practice of education. Its basic purpose is to provide a body of knowledge and techniques for effective guidance of educational practice. Crittenden speaks of three levels within educational theory and policy. The first level, the 'core' of educational theory, contains two somewhat different elements: (a) the clarification of the distinctive concepts employed in the context of education and the delineation of the ambit of education, and (b) the systematic working out of practical judgments to guide educational practice. The second level consists of the distinctive fields of study such as philosophy of education, psychology of education, sociology of education, and so on. These areas are distinguished by the characteristic methods they use and the knowledge they apply, and are 'of education' in that they concern issues arising about education, and arising in the actual conduct of education, as specified in the first level. The third level consists of the basic disciplines themselves (philosophy, psychology, etc.) in so far as they deal with matters of educational significance, such as the nature of moral virtue or the structure of intellectual processes, but treat them for their own sake and not primarily in terms of their educational importance.

The content of the philosophy of education is taken to include at least the following:

(i) logical features of the processes of teaching and learning, and logical and other questions about methods of critical inquiry and domains of knowledge;

(ii) general perspective on methods of inquiry and domains of knowledge;

(iii) moral and social philosophical questions about both the processes and institutions of education; the role of values in education and the question about moral education;

(iv) aesthetics in relation to the general practice of education;

(v) aspects of the philosophy of mind and action which bear on philosophical work in relation to the core of educational theory;

(vi) philosophical aspects of methodology in the historical and scientific study of education.

Thus, in this scheme, the philosopher has a contribution to make to education theory and practice in various ways. He bears much responsibility for basic questions about the delineation of the enterprise of education and for basic specification of its nature; the detailed studies involved in the philosophy of education cover a wide compass, and many areas of pure philosophy will have an important bearing on educational issues. Further, in line with an old but sometimes forgotten tradition dating back to Plato, Crittenden places considerable stress on the special position of the philosopher in relation to the systematic working out of practical judgments to guide educational practice. This special position derives from the philosopher's conceptual and logical skills, and also perhaps from an integrative facility derived from the intrusion of philosophical issues into almost all areas of human investigation.

It is a special feature of Crittenden's work that he has analysed the role of the philosopher in educational theory in some detail. It is worth highlighting here some particular aspects of his view of that role, for they are very revealing in relation to the logical coherence of his writing.

Firstly, it follows from Crittenden's analysis that the activities of a philosopher in educational theory, or even in the philosophy of education, are diverse, even disparate. The philosopher's role is not to deduce educational principles from an overall system, nor to write a definitive synthesis of educational philosophy. Rather there are many tasks to be undertaken and analyses to be done; the philosopher uses his special skills and understanding on one occasion to illuminate fundamental perspectives on the nature of education, on another to analyse concepts involved in the actual teaching process, and on still another to draw detailed policy implications from a particular educational theory. This view reflects, indeed even presupposes, a conception of philosophy in the contemporary analytic tradition as a problem-solving discipline, with limited aims and a strong conceptual aspect, and is likely to be uncongenial to a philosopher of a more systematic or metaphysical turn of mind. On the one hand, Crittenden explicitly if tentatively rejects 'metaphysical systems that make positive existence claims about the ultimate nature of things'[2]; on the other, much of the philosopher's work within educational theory will not be purely formal, but will issue in substantial conclusions about educational theory and practice.[3]

Secondly, as I have already mentioned, Crittenden's view places considerable stress on the role of the philosopher in the drawing of practical implications from educational theory. Like the philosophical activities themselves, the areas in which practical conclusions are to be drawn are diverse—from general characteristics of an educational system and the determination of the balance in an educational system between educative and social change goals, to specific aspects of teaching practice and curriculum design. This role derives not only from the special skills the philosopher is assumed to possess, but also from the fact that, within educational theory and policy, philosophical activity is harnessed to a general goal of a non-philosophical nature, namely the overall understanding of the educational process and the contribution of that understanding to the improvement of the quality of the process.

The third aspect of the philosopher's role which I want to note also arises from this harnessing of philosophical activity to a broader goal. Because philosophical activity is one of many activities contributing to the achievement of the broader goal, Crittenden holds that philosophers make their most valuable direct contribution to educational theory when they work in co-operation with teachers, curriculum experts, social scien-they work in co-operation with teachers, curriculum experts, social scien-tists, and so on, and that it is a mistake to organize research in education on the basis of independent applied disciplines. The philosopher's role is part of a co-operative enterprise, in which he joins with individuals possessing varying experience and theoretical expertise in the pursuit of a common goal.

Fourthly, what is (or ought to be) distinctive of this co-operative enterprise is an acceptance of the main concepts of education as embedded in a complex pattern of human activity, and with the normative force which they have within that activity. Education is not whatever is happening in certain areas and institutions at any time; it is a goal-directed process, with norms and values at the heart of the activity. Thus educational theory studies human processes or institutional changes not as bare facts, but as part of the normative activity of educating individuals.[4]

Crittenden's work very much reflects these four features. It covers a very wide range of apparently separate investigations, but is drawn into a logically coherent pattern by his underlying conception of the role of the philosopher in the educational enterprise. An important feature of his writing is his concern with the policy implications of educational theory, examples of which are a monograph on the conception of moral education in the Canadian Mackay Report[5] and a number of articles on reports leading to and issuing from the Australian Schools Commission.[6] All of his writings show a broad knowledge of the works of psychologists and other social scientists, and include evaluations of the educational implications of aspects of the work of figures as diverse as Durkheim, Skinner, Kohlberg, Bruner, and Daniel Bell.

It is clearly impossible in an introduction such as this to survey or summarize such a wide-ranging body of writings. Hence, having indicated in this section the rationale which ties those writings into an integral whole, I will in subsequent sections concentrate on three aspects of Crittenden's work.

The Nature and Value of Education

Of the many fundamental aspects of the 'core' educational theory which are considered in Crittenden's writings, this section concentrates on only two: his discussion of the theory of value and of the value of education, and his specification of the central concept of education.

The Concept of Non-Instrumental Value

One of the starting points of Crittenden's discussion of both the theory of value and the value of educational activities is the distinction between instrumental and non-instrumental value.[7] An object or an experience is regarded as instrumentally valuable if it is seen as valuable as a means of achieving some further end, while something is non-instrumentally valuable if it is valued in its own right, without any reference to further ends which it may be used to achieve. Clearly the major philosophical issues surround non-instrumental value, for the value of something as an instrument can be readily understood in terms of the means-end relationship and the value of the end. What, then, is it to value something in itself?

Crittenden rejects accounts of value which place stress on the psychological activities of valuing, such as those which assert that 'X is valuable' means 'I get pleasure, satisfaction, etc. from X' or 'Most people desire, need, or get satisfaction from X'. He argues, against the former statement, that arguments about the value of a thing are essential features of the use of the concept of value, and that the whole point of these arguments is to establish the intersubjective correctness of a value judgment. Further, while we commonly believe that the things we want or need are valuable, it is by no means absurd for a person to want or take pleasure in something while wishing he did not and while not valuing it, nor for a person to recognize that an object or experience is valuable without wanting it. Again, in arguments about values, it makes sense to claim that certain things which are not widely desired should be widely desired, because they are valuable. For these and related reasons, Crittenden rejects the two psychologically oriented accounts of value mentioned above.

Positively Crittenden argues[8] for a partial analogy between questions of value and scientific theories and mathematical arguments which, while being human creations, are answerable in respect of their truth or validity to objective conditions independent of the human mind.

Similarly questions of value are concerned with determining and applying appropriate standards of excellence, and an object cannot be said to be valuable unless it meets such standards. The constraint, analogous to the physical world for scientific theories, on value ideals for man is that human life must be perfected in their realization, and hence they must take account of the biological and social characteristics that distinguish human beings. An experience or object is non-instrumentally valuable if 'it makes a distinctive contribution to the quality of human life, judged in the light of what humans are and are capable of becoming'[9] and hence if its 'properties are such that to experience it is to enhance the quality of one's life'.[10] Among the other aspects of this view which Crittenden stresses are the points that a valuable object or experience is not necessarily 'pleasurable', that a diversity of objects and experiences contribute to the quality of human life, that judging the relative contribution of different experiences to the quality of life can rarely be done in a precise fashion, and that saying that an object is valuable cannot be equated with saying that it contributes to a satisfying experience.

This conception of value lies behind one fundamental aspect of Crittenden's educational philosophy which will be referred to on several occasions throughout the body of this introduction, namely his commitment to ideals of excellence and of moral value which can be objectively justified and which can be agreed upon as a result of rational discussion and inquiry. In terms of the above discussion, it is clear that this commitment is grounded at least partly in the view that objective judgments can be made about whether an object or experience contributes to the perfecting of the quality of human life, and that these judgments are independent of questions about ideals. This does seem to be a highly controversial matter. Many would argue that one's stance about what constitutes quality in human life reflects, rather than is the source of, one's position on moral issues and in respect of ideals of excellence, while others have said that in such matters we come back to moral sentiment or feeling or to unarguable moral judgment. On the other hand, major philosophical traditions base their approach to moral philosophy on a prior discernment of human nature, their understanding of human nature being the foundation of their value systems. It is not clear to me whether or not this is what Crittenden has in mind. While it does seem to be indicated by the discussion cited above, in his writings on moral education[11] he strenuously opposes views which conceive of morality as a means to a non-moral end (such as 'quality of human life'), partly on the ground that moral considerations cannot be excluded from the specification of the end. This view, that 'certain things are intrinsically valuable, . . . such objects exhibit various kinds of excellence relevant to the capacities and potentialities of human beings, [and] one does not need any further justification for engaging in the experience of these objects',[12] is a central aspect of Crittenden's approach to educational theory, and further elaboration seems to be required.

Concepts of Education

For Crittenden, as for many other writers, the broadest notion of education is that of initiation of an individual into the ways of a society. However he argues that, for sensible discussion of education in modern communities, this broad conception needs to be refined in two ways. Firstly, in societies with even a moderate degree of complexity, education develops as a specific form of activity with distinctive institutions and occupational groups, and hence the central meaning of the term 'education' is tied up with the institution of schooling and the practice of teaching. This is not to say that schools may not at any given time fail to educate–indeed Crittenden regards the writings of the 'deschooling' group (Illich, Reimer, etc.) as at least in part a salutary reminder of this fact[13]–nor that one can necessarily discern this central meaning of education by looking at (say) present-day schools. But he holds that this central meaning does emerge if one looks at the schooling and teaching institutions in long-term historical perspective and realizes that the concept 'education' involves reference to an ideal. These ideals will only be realized in certain key historical episodes, but they are still built into our idea of education.

The concept of education which emerges from this investigation is claimed to be one which is a complex process of initiation with these dimensions:

(i) the acquisition of basic linguistic, logical, and mathematical skills

(ii) an understanding of the best available bodies of theory and methods of inquiry for explaining human and natural phenomena

(iii) an understanding of the main varieties of belief and theory for interpreting human life and guiding action

(iv) an appreciation of the broad range of ways in which human beings express themselves imaginatively

(v) the attainment of some proficiency in the art of using concepts, theories, methods of inquiry, of evaluating, making practical judgments, expressing oneself imaginatively, and living as a moral agent.[14]

In short, and in a statement reminiscent of writers such as R.S. Peters and P.H. Hirst, Crittenden holds that 'schooling, as an ideal, is the systematic process of initiation into these public traditions of knowledge and understanding'[15] and that the central meaning of education is bound up with this account of schooling.

The second refinement necessary to the broad notion of education concerns the restriction of the central concept of education to liberal education, which is defined as education concerned with knowledge, skills, and attributes thought necessary for human beings as such, irrespective of what vocation one may adopt in life. In a later paper, published as Chapter 3 of the volume, this move is treated simply as a stipulation, but in *Education and Social Ideals* the matter is placed in the context of the discussion of the value of education. Crittenden argues[16] that the non-instrumental value of education is to be found in two sources: the value of the disciplines (mathematics, philosophy, art, etc.), in that understanding them and their subject matter is an enrichment of human life, and also in the fact that education not only involves coming to understand various disciplines but also involves the integration of the various areas of knowledge in the mind and life of the individual. This second aspect is one of non-instrumental value, for the process of integration also enriches the quality of human life. The forms of understanding are broadly defined to include the moral, artistic, philosophical, and religious forms of awareness within the scope of education. While education thus has non-instrumental value in two ways, Crittenden argues that there is no autonomous category of educational value, and that the values involved here can be shown to be a combination of epistemic, moral, and aesthetic values. There will also be a large number of instrumental values associated with education, corresponding to that wide diversity of human goals which are made more achievable by being educated rather than being uneducated. But the central concept of education, where non-instrumental value is to be found, involves liberal education in the sense defined above.

Space does not allow a further elaboration of Crittenden's concept of education. While I would not wish to oppose his general thrust, various questions do suggest themselves. Firstly I am not fully clear why Crittenden holds that the central concept of education is confined to liberal education in the sense defined. In Chapter 3 of this volume, Crittenden seems to make this purely a matter of stipulation, but in earlier writings a more substantive claim seems to be intended. As Crittenden himself points out[17], schooling has historically been both liberal and vocational, and one might hazard the guess that the liberal element has been reduced more frequently than the vocational. How can he, given his procedure of looking at the characteristics of the school, rule out some vocational training as part of the central concept of education? One argument might be that the vocational aspects are instrumental goals of education, are goals in the achievement of which education is a means, and hence are not essential to education. Instrumental goals, it might be argued, are only contingently related to the means, in that the process which is the means take place without the end being achieved.

I do not know whether Crittenden wants to rely on this argument, but in any case it raises a further query. One might argue that it is necessary for the quality of human life that a person be prepared for some vocation, and hence that some vocational schooling is non-instrumentally valuable. Crittenden allows that any particular learning episode will be instrumentally valuable in relation to an end, e.g. understanding natural processes[18], as it is a means to that end. Could it not then be claimed that any particular piece of vocational training will be instrumentally valuable in relation to the end of becoming prepared for a given vocation, but that the end of being prepared for some vocation is like understanding natural processes in that it is of non-instrumental value? To take another tack, might not one argue that the expert and committed practice of law or carpentry is an enrichment of human life? If this were so, bringing a person to competence in these forms of life would, on Crittenden's criteria, be a matter of non-instrumental value and so might be included in the central concept of education. While these queries are perhaps a little strained, they do suggest areas in which further clarification would be useful.

A final question concerns the criticism that is often raised of such views of education—that they are elitist in that they outline a conception of education of which only a few are capable. Crittenden's reply[19] appears to be that every individual needs intellectual, moral, and aesthetic understanding for the very living of life and that differences of ability and interest should be handled by varying the level of treatment of a common liberal curriculum rather than by abandoning it. While this reply seems to be correct in principle, the issue is so important that a fuller discussion seems called for.

On Teaching Morality

One of the most vexed traditional issues in both philosophy and educational theory has been whether, and in what ways, morality could or should be taught. In contemporary society, with both a plurality of moral views and a predominant pluralistic approach to competing theories and systems, the question of the way (if any) in which morality should be taught in schools, especially in schools initiated and supported by public funds, assumes particular importance. To take the extreme views, some would argue that, because of the competing moral stances in our society, the teaching of morality should have no place within the schools; while others, perhaps reflecting on the effects of moral nihilism in our century, would regard moral formation as the prime function of the school. These and related issues have been among Crittenden's main concerns in a series of articles[20], in his important monograph *Form and Content in Moral Education,* and in his recent survey monograph *Bearings in Moral Education.*[21] Our discussion of his treatment of these issues will mainly concentrate on the former volume; it must be recognized that this constitutes a very selective introduction to Crittenden's writings on moral education.

The treatment of moral education in *Form and Content in Moral Education* starts from the view of the Canadian Mackay Report that moral education should concern itself with the development of the skills of moral reasoning rather than with the substantive content of moral judgments. Given that the presuppositions of this view are acceptable, and in particular that the sharp distinction between moral reasoning and content can be sustained and that the issues in dispute in society concern only the content of moral judgments, the view offers a solution to the problem about pluralism and the teaching of morality. According to this view, the proper function of schools is to develop the skills of moral reasoning but to remain neutral in the broader debates about various moral theories and principles; once equipped with appropriate reasoning skills, the student can work out his own position within the conflicting theories current in society.

Crittenden stands firmly opposed to this view, and to the conceptions as to the nature of morality and of moral reasoning which lie behind it. In criticism of this position, Crittenden seeks to establish three points: (a) the specification of the area covered by the term 'morality' involves reference to the content of moral judgments, and cannot be achieved in terms of the isolation of some essential features of the notion of morality, whether they be formal criteria or theories which treat morality as the means to a non-moral end; (b) moral reasoning cannot be learnt and developed independently of the content of moral judgments; (c) wide differences of view exist about the nature of moral reasoning, and these have important consequences for the content of moral systems, so that concentration on moral reasoning provides only an illusion of moral neutrality. I will briefly outline and discuss Crittenden's arguments for each of these points in turn, and then consider his positive views on the nature of moral education and the problems of pluralism.

The Specification of Morality

In arguing against the attempt to specify the essential features distinctive of the notion of morality, Crittenden considers and attempts to refute in *Form and Content in Moral Education* one example of an attempt to do this by formal criteria (R.M. Hare) and three attempts to treat morality as a means to a non-moral end (Kurt Baier, John Rawls, and Philippa Foot). In *Bearings in Moral Education* he also draws attention to more recent work (such as that of Warnock[22]) which argues that 'the sphere of morality cannot be adequately identified without reference to a range of content'.[23] It is going beyond the scope of this introduction to consider Crittenden's criticisms of individual authors; here I will just illustrate his argument by noting his critique of one attempt to specify the essential features of morality.

In Chapter III of *Form and Content in Moral Education,* Crittenden considers the view that the common features of the moral domain are to be found in the purpose which morality serves, and hence he discusses positions which treat morality as a means to a non-moral end, such as 'happiness', 'human welfare', or 'enlightened self-interest'. This general characterization covers a very wide range of moral theories, but for the purposes of discussion we can take as an example the view that the feature common to moral reasons and judgments is that they are concerned with evaluating actions in respect of whether or not they contribute to increasing the welfare of human beings as a whole. Crittenden brings a range of objections to such a view, of which the two most important are as follows. Firstly, the means-end view implies that the end of morality (or what constitutes human welfare) must be identified without moral criteria, and that this means that welfare must be eventually regarded as the satisfaction of any wants, whatever they are, and that the only way to convince a person to be moral is to show him that morality is the best way of satisfying his wants. But we do not think of moral ideals (justice, benevolence, etc.) as useful guides for advancing our interests, nor treat a just man as one who knows how to get what he wants. Secondly, an effort is often made to circumscribe the wants, the satisfaction of which is the goal of moral action, perhaps to basic needs such as food, clothing, avoidance of pain, sexual satisfaction and companionship, and so on. Once we start to distinguish between needs in this way, the particular needs chosen are no longer non-moral goals of moral action but constituents of a particular moral system. In different moral views or systems, any one of these goals may be discarded and some other preferred. Hence morality cannot be regarded as a means to a non-moral end.

We need to recall here that what is at issue is not whether these theories give an adequate account of moral 'truth' but whether they succeed in delineating the moral domain. It does seem a powerful point that, for any posited 'end' in a means-end theory, it can be disputed whether this end is morally valuable in all or some of its instances, whether in a given case the end should not be over-ridden by other moral considerations, and so on. For any means-end theory, it seems possible that people with opposing views should meaningfully question the moral status of the end; if this is so, it is an inadequate delineation of the moral domain to say that moral reasons and judgments are those concerned with the achievement of such and such an end. In consequence of the arguments discussed in the previous paragraphs, Crittenden rejects any attempt to isolate the feature or features common to all moral discussion, whether that be attempted in terms of formal criteria or in terms of the basic end of all moral judgments.

For his own part, Crittenden advances a view of the specification of the moral domain akin to Wittgenstein's famous treatment of the meaning of the word 'game'. Morality for Crittenden is fundamentally distinguished by reference to certain public practices and institutions, including the range of related normative concepts, ideals, and attitudes. These include notions and practices such as respect for life, love, loyalty, justice, honesty, generosity, courage, promise keeping, the relationships involved in the family, and so on. No list of these concepts and practices could be either necessary or sufficient, for a person could be involved in moral dialogue while ignoring any one of them and a new moral concept or practice could always emerge. If a system is to be called 'moral', it must involve a significant number of these concepts and practices, or ones that are related to them. To use Wittgenstein language (which Crittenden does not employ), morality is a form of life, and to take part in moral discourse is to take part in a significant number of the activities involved in or related to this form of life.[24]

Moral Reasoning and the Content of Moral Judgments

This specification of the moral domain provides the basis for Crittenden's account of moral reasoning. The first point is that the moral domain cannot be isolated independently of the content of some moral judgments. We cannot claim that a person is involved in moral discourse if he is committed to none of the judgments and practices typical of the moral form of life; if this were the case, he would be involved in some other activity, but it could not be recognized as moral discourse. Secondly, the human practice of morality is concerned not just with judgments and actions but (as with other forms of life) with the whole complex of thoughts, attitudes, feelings, dispositions, and so on. As with the initiation into other human practices, the development of concepts and the whole host of related attitudes, feelings, and ideals plays a crucial role. Acquiring the concepts of love, justice, honesty, or generosity essentially involves learning from and at least in part coming to share a community's attitudes of praise or blame, admiration, contempt, and so on. Learning the concepts of morality cannot be treated as learning certain purely descriptive mores but involves initiation into a much more complex human activity. This also relates to the point that we would not regard a person as morally educated if he had the utmost facility in regard to logical skills employing moral terms, but no commitment whatsoever to any moral judgments.

On the basis of these points, Crittenden concludes that moral judgments consist fundamentally in deciding how a situation is to be described in moral terms; the description itself has the character of an evaluation, and consequently brings to bear a whole range of attitudes and emotions. Often the correct description is not apparent, and detailed argument and reasoning is required before it can be decided upon. In general, the perfecting of this activity of evaluative description, and of the thoughts, reasons, and emotions which are involved in it, forms a crucial part of moral education. Development of a person's ability to reason morally cannot be achieved in a way which is neutral as to the content of the judgments he makes.

Moral Neutrality and Theories of Moral Reasoning

When a philosopher is engaged in studying the character of scientific reasoning, it is natural to suppose that his conclusions will be independent of the content of any particular scientific theory. One might even go so far as to argue that one of the criteria of adequacy of an account of scientific reasoning is that it is independent of any particular theory content, and hence compatible with every possible theory content. A similar view is often held about moral reasoning: that an account could be given of the logic of moral reasoning which imposes only logical restrictions on the content of moral judgments. The Mackay Report seems to be among those committed to this view, but Crittenden firmly opposes it, and adduces two main lines of argument.

Firstly, in propounding the logical features of moral judgments and moral reasoning, philosophers are not in fact talking about the uses of language actually employed by everyday people in diverse moral practices, systems, and cultures. Rather they are setting out an ideal, the logical features of 'morality' towards which actual uses of moral language more or less approximate in different cultures, circumstances, and so on. Any such statement of an idea will clearly have some effective prescriptive force, and will in practice imply a grading of actual moral systems in order of excellence.

Secondly, theories of the logical nature of moral discourse are widely disputed among philosophers, and these differences of opinion have broad implications for the content and status of moral beliefs. For example, among the different views of the logical status of 'It is right to do X', we could distinguish those which treat this as an assertion of fact, as an imperative, as an expression of emotional acclaim for X, and as an expression of approval for X. Each of these logical views would have different implications about the role of evidence in relation to this judgment, about the sorts of reasoning processes which would be appropriate and so on. These disagreements are not about the precise logical character of reasoning processes otherwise isolated, but touch the very possibility of the moral reasoning processes which some philosophers regard as important. For this reason, as well as because in fact different theories of moral reasoning are associated with different moral systems, moral reasoning cannot be regarded as a neutral retreat from the controversies surrounding competing moral systems.

Pluralism and Moral Education

If Crittenden is right that (a) morality cannot be defined in terms of some essential features independent of content; (b) moral reasoning cannot be learnt independently of the content of moral judgments; and (c) concentrating on moral reasoning does not serve to achieve moral neutrality, it follows that the Mackay Report account of moral education and of its role in schools in a pluralistic society is not adequate. How then does Crittenden see the role of moral education in the face of moral pluralism?

The first question clearly concerns the nature of moral pluralism. The simple fact that people have different moral views has no obvious educational implications–these arise only when we adopt some stance towards this fact. While Crittenden distinguishes various things that moral pluralism might mean, he concludes that what it involves is 'the right to profess one's moral beliefs and to attempt by non-violent means to have them shape public policy'.[25] While he does not claim that logical implications are involved, Crittenden argues that this moral principle presupposes a number of other moral virtues such as personal freedom, the toleration of diversity in thought and action, fairness and concern for the interests of others, and recognition of the dignity and worth of each human being as a moral agent. Moral pluralism does not then stand alone, but it is grounded in a moral tradition; consequently there can be no objection on the basis of moral pluralism to education in at least the moral foundations of this tradition. Schools cannot be accused of violating the principle of moral pluralism to the extent to which they teach the substantial moral beliefs on which that principle is itself based. Further, in pursuing its educational purpose, the school must actively promote the moral values associated with the tradition of critical rationality (for example, honesty, integrity, humility, objectivity, impartiality).[26] Thus Crittenden finds that substantive moral education can be justified in the face of moral pluralism to the extent that both the principle of pluralism itself and the concept of education involve moral presuppositions, and involve a commitment to certain moral virtues. On moral issues outside these two areas, the principle of pluralism requires that public schools adopt an impartial position.

It might be objected to this view that only a truncated version of morality can be justified on the basis of the moral presuppositions of pluralism and of education itself, and hence that Crittenden's argument justifies only the teaching of an unduly restricted morality in public schools. Crittenden's response to this objection seems to have changed in his recent writings. In *Form and Content in Moral Education,* he replies that concentration on the truncated version of morality is a less than ideal compromise arrangement, which is nevertheless the most satisfactory response to a complex practical problem; persons who are unhappy with this compromise should be legally and financially free to establish alternative schools.[27] In *Bearings in Moral Education,* the suggestion of an unsatisfactory compromise is gone.[28] Here Crittenden invokes Strawson's distinction[29] between ethical ideals and social morality: the latter consists of the moral demands that must be accepted in a society in order to secure the conditions in which the more inclusive and diverse ethical ideals can flourish. He argues that the public school's task should be restricted to defending the content of social morality, although schools might also pursue something of the vision of an ethical ideal upholding the tradition of critical rationality. These replies seem to me to be inadequate, but they can be properly discussed only after we consider his broader views about the nature of moral education.

The Nature of Moral Education

Although the extent of moral education which Crittenden finds justifiable in public schools may be regarded by some as truncated, he does in the process of his discussion develop a rich conception of moral education. In general, he argues that one key objective of the school should be 'the more general initiation of human beings into the practice of morality'[30]; this process will involve development and refinement of the full range of moral concepts, together with the perceptions, attitudes, emotions, and evaluations on which they are founded and which are necessarily associated with them, in addition to the development of more formal reasoning skills. Following his own discussion in *Form and Content in Moral Education*[31], there are a number of features of this view which might be highlighted.

(a) He stresses that morality is not simply a theoretical matter, and that the practice of morality is a crucial part (but only a part) of moral education. The ideal situation would be for moral development to be a result of an interacting blend of both theoretical and practical activity.

(b) This importance of action has several consequences, notably that study of moral theory in later school years presupposes previous engagement in the practices of morality, that the general life of the school must be consistent with the moral theory being taught, and that co-operation between parents and the school will be crucial if successful moral education is to be achieved.

(c) While the work of moral education goes on throughout the curriculum (history and social science, for example, providing important information and insights for moral development), literature and art forms generally have a special position in moral education. This position arises from the importance in moral judgment and action of perception, emotion, and imagination. Under appropriate guidance, Crittenden argues, experience of literature and art can develop just those aspects of sensibility which are indispensable in the morally educated person.

While a comprehensive assessment of Crittenden's approach to moral education and moral pluralism cannot be attempted here, I will raise just one issue—the apparent conflict between the rich conception of moral education outlined above and the more truncated one which is held to be compatible with pluralism. One is inclined to ask, for example, whether the rich conception of moral education is to apply only to private schools, public schools being restricted to the narrower conception which is compatible with pluralism. Given the involvement of moral issues in the whole curriculum, will it be possible in practice to separate the truncated version from the broad process of moral education? Is there not a danger that the attempt to make this separation will undermine the viability of any process of moral education? Throughout his writings, Crittenden takes an 'objectivist' approach to moral judgments, and stresses the importance of rational argument and discussion in the achievement of moral understanding and knowledge. If morality is one among the forms of human understanding and knowledge, why is not substantive moral education justified in these terms, just as physics, history, and social science are justified as part of education by being forms of human understanding? Or would he be prepared to argue that, to the extent that there is disagreement in the community about aspects of the physical or social sciences, then to that extent education in these areas should be truncated? Or is it that there are important relevant differences between moral 'knowledge' and other forms of knowledge, or about the character of the disagreements in this area, which lead to a different treatment of morality? On the other hand, it may be that, when the context of social morality is further spelt out, the justified process of moral education may not be so truncated as it appears at first sight. It seems clear that there is a major group of queries here which need further explanation.

These issues are indeed explored further in the important article which constitutes Chapter 8 of this volume. Crittenden not only looks again at issues to do with moral pluralism and the objectivity of moral judgments, but also considers whether moral education should be a separate unit of the curriculum, analyses the relation of various disciplines to moral education and examines aspects of some integrated curriculum projects in the social sciences which are relevant to moral education. While the detailed discussion in this chapter which explores Crittenden's rich conception of moral education through disciplines and programs is enormously valuable, it seems to me that the general theoretical questions outlined above remain.

The treatment of pluralism is again based on the distinction between social morality and comprehensive moral systems or ethical ideals. Here social morality 'consists of the moral standards and practices for protecting and promoting general human welfare among the members of a society'.[32] However there are two major changes in Crittenden's treatment of moral pluralism. Firstly, this conception of social morality is broader than that defined in *Bearings in Moral Education*; in the earlier work, this concept covers the moral demands necessary for alternative ethical ideals to flourish in society, while in this volume it covers the moral requirements for the flourishing of human life in society. The moral implications of the latter conception are clearly much broader and much more controversial than those of the former conception. Secondly, Crittenden asserts that schools 'are clearly justified in advocating the values of the basic social morality'[33] in addition to being justified in defending the values implicit in the policy of pluralism and in education itself. Crittenden does not explain clearly how this additional form of moral content is to be justified in the face of pluralism, especially having regard to the controversial aspects implicit in the broader conception of social morality. He does, however, re-state his commitment to the objectivity of moral judgments, and argue that 'there are properties of objects and actions along with facts about human nature and experience that can provide justifying grounds for claims about what is good and right for human beings'.[34] It may be his intention to justify the teaching of the content of basic social morality in terms of the objectivity of judgments in this area; certainly he holds that, in teaching this morality, teachers must be prepared to provide the objective grounds on which the content is justified.

Equality and Education

In the twentieth century, education has been at the centre of attempts of social reform, to some extent because reformers have regarded education as a fundamental human good which should be more equitably distributed, but more importantly because education has been seen as an instrument in the achievement of social reform. As a consequence, the concept of equality has played a crucial role in recent reformist discussions of education. This section briefly surveys some aspects of Crittenden's treatment of this theme, with particular reference to his discussion of the reports of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission and of the Commission itself.

Concepts of Equality

A general egalitarian conception of equality, variously stating that men are (have been created) equal, that they should be treated as if they are equal, or that they should be so treated as to become equal, has occupied a central role in social thought. Crittenden rejects such extreme versions of the ideal of equality; he points to the manifest diversity in the needs, abilities, and interests of human beings and argues that treating individuals in schools as if they were the same would constitute a grave disservice to all and that attempts to make all the same would be unjust to many.[35] However he does appear to support a modified version of an egalitarian ideal presented by Mortimore[36], which proposes, as an ideal, a state of affairs in which each member of society enjoys the same level of total human good. On this view, equality is required only in the overall level of total good possessed by individuals, and particular goods will be unequally distributed, while inequality of treatment will be justified only when it promotes equality of total good. But equality is only one ideal among others, and it may on occasions be over-ridden by other ideals. This position is thus compatible with variations in endowments between human beings, but implicitly stresses the need for special endowments to be placed at the benefit of the society and for compensating increases in other goods to less endowed individuals to occur. This contrasts with some liberal-capitalist interpretations of equality, in which individuals with special abilities would be encouraged to, or at least permitted to, use those abilities to generate an increased share of other goods (wealth, power, etc.) for themselves.

Crittenden argues[37] that one minimum requirement of this ideal is one principle of equality of opportunity, in the sense that everyone has an adequate opportunity to possess what is desirable for a worthwhile human life. The opportunity which is provided by the fulfilment of this principle is the opportunity to possess sufficient total good for a worthwhile human life, in spite of innate abilities, social position, etc. Equalizing opportunity in this sense requires treating people unequally, and will require that society should remove social conditions which stand in the way of some individuals' achievement of equal opportunity. This goal of equal opportunity, derived as it is from a general ideal of equality which in turn presupposes a communal rather than competitive conception of human society, is antithetical to the conception of equality of opportunity in a liberal-capitalist framework. In the latter context, equality of opportunity will ultimately imply arranging social conditions so that each individual's advancement is constrained only by his native abilities, attitudes, and desires; given innate differences between individuals, this will in turn imply a society in which the total good is unequally distributed. In most of Crittenden's discussion of educational policy, attention is primarily focused on this liberal-capitalist interpretation of equal opportunity, which prescribes that

> in so far as it is physically possible and morally permissible, the conditions under which individuals compete for the rewards of the system shall be equal, and thus the rewards shall be distributed in proportion to personal merit.[38]

In *Education and Social Ideals* he does provide the alternative interpretation which he regards as more satisfactory.

Equality and the Australian Schools Commission

In analysing the concepts of equality employed in *Schools in Australia: Report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission* and the first two reports of the Schools Commission, Crittenden detects four separate themes:[39]

(i) Each of the reports shows some sympathy for what he refers to as the liberal-capitalist interpretation of equal opportunity, in the full-

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blooded sense that schools and other social agencies should attempt to correct for environmental differences between students, so that their effective educational opportunities are equal.

(ii) The reports also lean towards the doctrine of equality of outcomes, to some extent in terms of equality of outcomes among individuals, but primarily in terms of seeking equal average outcomes across each non-educationally defined sub-group of the society, so that outcomes are equalized across sex, racial, religious, income, and geographical groups, and so on. *Schools in Australia* considers this idea but appears to reject it, but the first report of the Schools Commission endorses a similar view.

(iii) In spite of showing an affinity for both these concepts, the actual recommendation of these bodies (particularly of the Interim Committee) are primarily intended to bring about equality in the conditions of schooling, to bring all schools up to a desirable level of educational inputs within a relatively short time. But this practical aim suggests an underlying conception of equal opportunity much weaker than in (i) above, where opportunity is defined in terms of resource inputs.

(iv) Despite the references to equality and equal opportunity in *Schools in Australia,* Crittenden holds that this report is more intent on ensuring that, as far as possible, everyone in our society attains a minimum desirable level of achievement in relation to common educational objectives. On this interpretation, the report misleads when it speaks about schools promoting 'a more equal basic achievement between children[40]–what is intended is that all children be brought up to an adequate level of achievement and this should, but need not, lead to a more equal achievement pattern.

Crittenden is a trenchant critic of the role played in many discussions of educational policy including that of the reports mentioned above, by the liberal-capitalist version of equality of opportunity and by the doctrine of equality of outcomes. In relation to the former he makes two main points[41], in addition to citing what he believes to be the burden of recent empirical evidence, that changes in the school are relatively ineffective in generating social change. Firstly, even the full-blooded liberal-capitalist version, which implies compensatory educational programs to offset unequal environmental conditions, does nothing to make society more equal. What it will do, if successful, is to base the inequities in society on natural ability rather than on inherited wealth or social position. Poverty, for example, still remains, even though the pattern of incidence of poverty may change. Thus those who seek social reform through equal educational opportunity in this sense distract attention from the need for direct measures to attack poverty and other social problems. Secondly, this version of the principle of educational opportunity reinforces the unfortunate connection in our society between education and socioeconomic position. This stress on the instrumental value of education has already had adverse consequences, such as the escalation of irrelevant educational requirements in the job market and, rather than being made the basis of social planning, this stress ought to be replaced by a return to the conception of education as a worthwhile activity in its own right. This is indeed the basic thrust of Crittenden's writing on education and equality: liberal education is something of vast importance in its own right, and does not need to be justified in terms of equality or other goals; further, the ability of the schools to provide education should not be compromised by the intrusion of programs designed to achieve non-educational goals; nevertheless, genuine provision of widespread liberal education within a society may well have a quite revolutionary impact on that society.

Crittenden rightly points out that, given different natural abilities between individuals, the goal of equal outcomes across individuals is not achievable, and he also makes other criticisms of this goal. In relation to the more subtle objective that outcomes should be on average equalized across all non-educationally defined groups, Crittenden argues a number of points, although the thrust of his argument is less clear to me.[42] Firstly, the individual is the unit in education, and none of the social groups in question is sufficiently homogeneous in the relevant characteristics to be treated as the unit in educational prescription. Secondly, it is a mistake to assume that differences in educational outcomes can be resolved by concentrating on economic and social factors, for there are roughly the same differences of scholastic performance between siblings as between social classes or races. Thirdly, aiming at equality of outcomes distorts the nature of education as a human good. As an achievement, education is highly complex and involves attitudes, ways of thinking, acting, and feeling, and is critically dependent on the individual's response and effort.

This treatment of the more sophisticated version of the equality-of-outcomes goal seems to me to be the least convincing aspect of Crittenden's treatment of equality and education. As I understand the goal, as stated for example by Halsey, it is that educational outcomes should be equalized across every non-educationally defined classification of students, which is another way of saying that no non-educational factor (social, economic, ethnic, etc.) should have a residual effect on outcomes. While this implies many forms of compensatory treatment, it does not imply that the group is made the unit for educational prescription, nor that the equality of outcomes is to be achieved by concentrating on social and economic factors. Further there seems to me to be no reason why this goal of equality of outcomes distorts the nature of education as a human good—it may be precisely because one values education in itself and recognizes its complexity and dependency on motivation, that one seeks equality of outcomes across all non-educationally defined groups. Variations in natural ability between individuals provide no problem for this goal. It is possible that natural ability or interest is correlated with some non-educational classifications, as Jensen and others have argued. Even if this were so, it does not necessarily dispose of this goal, but simply indicates that in certain cases further compensatory programs may be needed.

The Role of Equality in Education

For reasons such as those outlined above, Crittenden concludes in Chapter 10 of this volume that 'whatever interpretation is placed on equality as a social ideal, it seems to have only marginal bearing on the practice and objectives of education'.[43] The modest place which the principle does have in the practice of education is this:

> Where two people are equal in characteristics that are relevant to the attainment of what is judged to be a desirable level of education, they should have equivalent opportunities for achieving such an education.[44]

His own positive approach is to stress, firstly, the human right of every person to an adequate education, to an adequate general introduction to the best traditions of thought, feeling, and expression available to the society and, secondly, the importance of providing every student with the opportunities to derive the best education possible for him, without in any way trying to equalize educational outcomes. This approach leads naturally to his support for a common curriculum, and for his endorsement of the fourth of the themes isolated above in the reports of the Schools Commission, that policy should aim to bring everyone up to a minimum standard of achievement in terms of common educational objectives. His over-riding principle is that the process of becoming educated is to be regarded as valuable in its own right, and should not be seen as a means of achieving socioeconomic or social reform goals.

Crittenden has not, to my knowledge, attempted to integrate fully his discussions of equality and educational policy with the more theoretical statements in *Education and Social Ideals*. In that latter work, he appears to support an ideal of equality in terms of which every individual possesses an equal overall level of total human good, and throughout his writings he stresses that education is itself a human good and is a necessary condition for the possession of some other human goods. From these two propositions, something would seem to follow about equality of access to education as a condition of general equality. Quite what this implication would be is not clear but, given the importance of education as a human good, it is not obvious that it would be compatible with Crittenden's conclusion, quoted above, that equality has only a marginal bearing on the practice and objectives of education. On the other hand, the more general view would seem to imply that equalizing the total good possessed by individuals would not necessarily involve equalizing the educational level achieved by individuals or groups.

Conclusion: Some Emerging Issues

In outlining some aspects of Crittenden's thought in the preceding sections, various issues have emerged as being in need of further elaboration. In this section I bring some of these points together, and examine the inter-relationships between them.

In the second section, it was pointed out that Crittenden's theory of education was based on a firm commitment that some objects and experiences are non-instrumentally valuable, so that their value does not have to be argued in terms of their relation to some other object or experience. Throughout his writings, especially those on moral education, Crittenden makes it clear that questions of value can be rationally argued about and decided. A question thus arises about the forms of justification for the claim that a given object or experience is valuable in a non-instrumental way. His reply is that something is intrinsically valuable if it is 'humanly perfecting [because it] exhibits various kinds of excellence relevant to the capacities and potentialities of human beings' or if it enhances the quality of human life, seen in the light of what human beings are and are capable of becoming. Thus the two key aspects of an object or experience being non-instrumentally valuable would seem to be: (i) that it contributes to the quality or the excellence of human life; (ii) that this quality of excellence is discerned in terms of human potentialities as well as actualities.

Now, without wishing to disagree with the basic claim that some objects and experiences are of intrinsic value, it is evident that this foundation of Crittenden's views on the nature of education needs to be further explored. For example, how do we settle disputes about what constitutes quality or excellence in human life? How do we discern human potentialities, and decide which potentialities are relevant in relation to the quality of life? Can such matters be settled objectively by rational discussion, or have we reached an area where only an individual's moral feeling or intuition is relevant? Crittenden has made some substantial progress on these issues in his discussions of aesthetic argument as a rational mode of argument which is neither deductive nor inductive, but which involves both cognitive and affective dimensions and the experience of an object in a particular way.[45] Much more remains to be done.

It may seem unduly harsh to pose these questions in relation to the writings of one whose prime concern is education, as they are issues which have haunted moral philosophy for more than two millenia. But they are intimately related to Crittenden's educational philosophy. I would argue that many of the main issues which arise in relation to Crittenden's writing can be traced back eventually to these questions. Three examples follow.

(i) As detailed earlier, one central theme in Crittenden's work is that the value of education lies in the initiation of individuals into processes and forms of life which are intrinsically valuable, and that quality in education is to be found through preoccupation with the highest human achievements in the relevant areas. Given this basic position, the content of one's concept of education will depend on what view one takes about what constitutes quality or excellence in human life (and on the criteria and procedures one uses to decide this question), as well as on the way in which those human excellences to which education is directly relevant are selected from the total. Crittenden is not fully explicit on either of these issues, but his final position is clear: education is fundamentally concerned with initiation into the various forms of meaning through which human life and the world are explained, interpreted and evaluated.[46]

One example of a similar approach which works towards a broader conception of education can be seen in recent discussion of 'cultural necessities'.[47] This approach would see education as the initiation into the culture of a human community, and would consequently place stress on aspects which are held to be essential to any culture. While this approach might seem to have some advantages, for example in that it sees education and intellectual life generally as more integral parts of the life of a society, it obviously has some major queries to answer. How are these 'cultural necessities' to be discerned? Are they held to be necessities in the sense that every society has exhibited them, or in the stronger sense that every society must exhibit them? How do we decide what cultural necessities are relevant to education? After adjusting for differences in terminology, these questions are probably not far removed from those posed above in relation to Crittenden's views.

(ii) In a world of continuing technological change, high youth unemployment and escalating job credential requirements, one crucial issue is the relation between schooling and work. Crittenden takes an uncompromising position on this issue.[48] Schools should concentrate on the provision of liberal education and should largely subordinate other functions. For those who are incapable of, or not interested in, engaging in the activities of liberal education, alternative institutions should be provided during childhood and adolescence, and as soon as they are old enough they should be free to leave. Schools should provide vocational guidance and the study of the place of work in human life should be an important aspect of the curriculum, but schools should avoid diverting their programs to a form of job training.

Some will regard this as an inadequate response to a serious issue in social policy. Crittenden's basic justification for his position here is that liberal education involves initiation into forms of life which are intrinsically valuable, and that only the school can provide this initiation. Given the value of the forms of life to which students are being introduced, it will be a mistake to compromise in relation to these processes. He has also introduced an important distinction between one's work and one's job—work is any sustained effect in production of a worthwhile good or state of affairs and a job is work by which one earns a living—and has argued that, with increasing leisure, we need to place increasing stress on fitting people for genuine work which may or may not involve a job.[49] Liberal education is necessary to prepare individuals for work in this broader sense.

The point I wish to make here is that a further investigation of some of the questions listed at the beginning of this section might lead to a modification of this position. For example, if we look at what constitutes quality in human life and at what the broad range of human potentialities involve, it will be apparent that there are other activities of intrinsic value than those to do with describing, explaining, and evaluating the world and human life. The question does arise about the role of schooling in relation to these other valued activities, and whether the overall welfare of students may not in some circumstances be advanced by a broader approach.

(iii) I have discussed at length Crittenden's view about the role of moral education in the face of moral pluralism, and the apparent conflict in his writings between his rejection of views which delineate morality as a means to a non-moral end such as human welfare and his defence of non-instrumental value in apparently similar terms. Here again, two key aspects of his position—about moral education and about the objectivity of moral judgments—would seem to require further elucidation of issues surrounding the quality of human life and the discernment of human potentialities.

The task of this introduction has been to provide a critical commentary on some of the key issues in Brian Crittenden's writings. It is important that the critical comments do not make us overlook the tremendous achievement which these writings represent, nor the very real contributions to educational theory and practice which abound in them. In his writings to date, Crittenden has covered an impressive array of issues with notable intelligence and style, and few contemporary philosophers of education can claim to have ranged over as broad a compass with such a combination of originality and consistency. My comments in this introduction are directed only to drawing forth further valuable contributions from him in the future.

Notes and References

(Unless otherwise stated the author in the following references is B.S. Crittenden.)

[1] See Philosophy in educational theory, chapter 2 of this volume, especially pp. 00–00. In relation to the issues of this section, see also chapter 1 of this volume, and B.S. Crittenden (Ed.), *Philosophy of Education*, New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University and Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1967, (commentary on H.S. Broudy's paper).

[2] This volume, chapter 2, p.67.

[3] ibid., pp.68–70.

[4] ibid., p.72 and Values in the study of education, chapter 1 of this volume, pp.47–50.

[5] B.S. Crittenden, *Form and Content in Moral Education: An Essay on Aspects of the Mackay Report*, Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1972. Part of this monograph is reproduced as chapter 7 in this volume.

[6] B.S. Crittenden, Arguments and assumptions of the Karmel report: A critique, In J.V. D'Cruz and P.J. Sheehan (Eds), *The Renewal of Australian Schools*, (2nd and enlarged ed.), Hawthorn, Vic.: ACER, 1978. See also chapter 10 of this volume.

[7] Cf. B.S. Crittenden, *Education and Social Ideals*, Toronto: Longman Canada Ltd, 1973, pp.1–7; Characteristics of Quality in Education, chapter 3 of this volume, especially pp.88–90.

[8] *Education and Social Ideals*, p.4.

[9] ibid., p.4.

[10] ibid., p.7.

[11] For example, *Form and Content in Moral Education*, chapter 3.

[12] This volume, chapter 3, p.90.

[13] See Recent Radical Writings on Education, Presidential address to the Philosophy of Education Society of Australia, August 1975

[14] *Education and Social Ideals*, pp.10–11.

[15] ibid., p.11.

[16] This volume, chapter 3, pp.85–6.

[17] ibid., p.86.

[18] *Education and Social Ideals*, p.16.

[19] This volume, chapter 3, p.95.

[20] See for example, C.M. Beck, B.S. Crittenden and E.V. Sullivan (Eds), *Moral Education: Interdisciplinary Approaches*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971; Introduction to discussion, Ethical pluralism and moral education in the public schools, In T. Morrison and A. Burton (Eds), *Options: Reforms and Alternatives for Canadian Education*, Toronto: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973; Developmental Theory and Moral Education. *Victorian Institute of Educational Research Bulletin*, 1974, **33**, 15–30.

[21] B.S. Crittenden, *Bearings in Moral Education*, Hawthorn, Vic.: ACER, 1978.

[22] G.J. Warnock, *The Object of Morality*. London: Methuen, 1971.

[23] *Bearings in Moral Education*, p.16.

[24] For further elaboration of Crittenden's views on these issues, see chapter 7 of this volume.

[25] *Form and Content in Moral Education*, p.52.

[26] ibid., pp.56–7; see also *Bearings in Moral Education*, pp.82–3.

[27] op.cit., p.63.

[28] op.cit., p.83.

[29] See P.F. Strawson, Social morality and individual ideal. In I.T. Ramsey (Ed.), *Christian Ethics and Contemporary Philosophy*. London: SCM Press, 1966.

[30] *Form and Content in Moral Education*, p.65.

[31] ibid., pp.65–73.

[32] This volume, chapter 8, p.213.

[33] ibid., p.214.

[34] ibid., p.216–17.

[35] *Education and Social Ideals,* pp.200–1.

[36] G.W. Mortimore, An ideal of equality. *Mind,* 1968, 77, 222–42.

[37] *Education and Social Ideals.* p.203.

[38] Equality and education, chapter 10 of this voiume, p.277.

[39] See Arguments and assumptions of the Karmel report: a critique, pp.23–4, Equality and education, chapter 10 of this volume, pp.275–6, 280–2.

[40] Australia, Schools Commission, Interim Committee, *Schools in Australia:* The Report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission, Canberra: AGPS, 1971, p.11.

[41] This volume, chapter 10, p.279.

[42] ibid., pp.281–3.

[43] ibid., p.285.

[44] ibid., p.283–4.

[45] See From description to evaluation in aesthetic judgment. *Journal of Aesthetic Education,* 1968, 2(4), 37–58; and Persuasion: Aesthetic argument and the language of teaching, In R.A. Smith (Ed.), *Aesthetic Concepts and Education,* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970, Ch. 10.

[46] This volume, chapter 3, p.90.

[47] See, for example, J.V. D'Cruz and P.J. Sheehan, Culture and the Schools Commission in educational renewal. In *The Renewal of Australian Schools,* pp.7–11. See also, J.D. Hinkson, *The Emergence of Education as Therapeutic Management of an Unconstrained Self.* Ph.D. Thesis, La Trobe University, 1977.

[48] See for example, this volume, chapter 9, pp.263–6.

[49] See Education: Liberal or vocational? *Western Australian Primary Principal,* 1979, 1(7), 7–29. (Address given at Annual Conference of the WA Primary Principals Association and Education Department of WA, May 1979.) This paper also contains illuminating discussions of other issues concerning schools and the economy, unemployment, and work.

Preface

The practice of critical inquiry in our culture began with the ancient Greeks. It is manifested in various ways in the traditions of rational understanding that belong to the systematically and self-consciously developed aspects of culture. In broad terms, this book interprets education as the deliberate process by which human beings enter effectively into these traditions. The basic purpose of this education is to enable each individual to understand and appreciate the main contexts of meaning within which human life is enacted and, through the mastery of publicly tested skills and standards, to exercise independent, critical judgment. What I am referring to has been commonly called liberal education. It is liberal in the sense associated with its early historical use, namely, the education that is fitting for those who enjoy the status of free citizens. (As well as the imperatives of democracy, most people in contemporary industrial societies do in fact have the leisure that such an education presupposes.) It is also liberal in the more important sense that it enhances the range and quality of human choice.

Within the traditions of rational understanding and liberal education there are significant variations. In the interpretation I am supporting, rationality (and education) is not confined to a purely intellectual activity as though human beings were disembodied minds or computers. It extends beyond theoretical knowledge to the emotions and the full scope of imagination, the appreciation of aesthetic form, and the exercise of moral and other kinds of practical judgment in action. The word 'understanding' is usefully ambiguous in that it connotes not only the intellectual grasp of underlying principles, the relationship between parts and so on, but also sympathetic awareness of a person or situation.

The extremes of rationalism (where, to adapt Yeats, the body *is* bruised to pleasure soul) undermine from within the traditions of rational understanding and liberal education. In part they are responsible for the various movements that reject these traditions altogether. Although the latter have always been under threat, the attacks during the past hundred years seem to have taken particularly virulent and extreme forms. Some have rejected the primacy of reason in favour of the primacy of the will, others have supplanted it by an appeal to feeling, others by 'doing' or immediate experience. In broad terms, the revolt has taken both an individualist and collectivist form. The first expresses the desire to achieve absolute freedom from all restraints and exalts the individual will. It has been manifested not only in political anarchy, but in nihilistic movements in the arts and morality–and even in science. At the extreme point there are those who–like the writers in the tradition that runs from de Sade through Poe and Baudelaire to the present *avant-garde*–attempt to escape from the tyranny of language and logic into the realm of pure individual expression, to make an ideal of immorality, and break down the distinction between madness and sanity. It is not surprising that, in this frame of mind, the act of someone killing himself with drugs or alcohol can be hailed as a supreme gesture of rebellion and the achievement of total freedom. In a somewhat less dramatic form, the rejection of rational understanding is evidenced in such symptoms as inconsistent and arbitrary patterns of moral standards, in 'pure' tolerance and permissiveness, in neurotic preoccupation with a private, inner self.

One significant version of the collectivist form of the revolt in this century has been the imposition by the state of an unquestioning conformity to a master ideology or group mind (usually interpreted for the masses by an individual or an elite). Dissidents are treated as heretics or as insane. In another version–perhaps in reaction to the void of anomic individualism–people willingly submit themselves without reservation to the will of a group or a charismatic leader. In liberal capitalist societies, the pressures towards mindless group conformity often work in fairly subtle ways. They are present, for example, in the manipulation of wants through advertising, in mass entertainment, in the obsession with psychological and physical comfort. The last of these has led to an extraordinary reliance on the purveyors of therapy and other specialists in our society. (It seems that one can't relax, have sex, or go for a run without consulting the works of an expert.)

Education for rational understanding involves a careful balance between the communal and individual aspects in the development of human beings. On the one hand, it stresses that they acquire their human character only by learning to participate in public shared worlds of meaning. On the other, in promoting the traditions of rational understanding, it seeks to develop in each individual the skills and attitudes necessary for a critical acceptance of these traditions and thus to provide the basis for independent thought and action.

In several of the chapters in this book, I have argued that everyone should have the opportunity to gain an adequate introduction to the main forms of understanding that make up the critically examined culture. These forms of understanding constitute a common curriculum that can offset the fragmenting tendencies of pluralism while at the same time accommodating the particular manifestations that the forms have taken (e.g. in literature and the arts) among different cultural groups. It must be acknowledged, however, that such an education is incompatible with any group that refuses to submit its beliefs and values to critical inquiry.

In an earlier work, D'Cruz and Sheehan defend a similar relationship between education and the traditions of reflective culture in our society.[1] They point out that this culture forms the substance of a common curriculum because it is concerned with values of broad human significance. They also stress that, in this curriculum, the learning of skills should not be detached from the related content of beliefs, attitudes, and purposes in the various modes of the reflective culture.

Education as I interpret it in this book has both a conservative and a reconstructive aspect. It is trying to conserve the standards and attitudes of rational judgment in all the major areas of culture to ensure that traditions are not clung to blindly or rejected capriciously. As I suggest in Chapter 9, the radical possibility for social reform is that an education in the main forms of rational understanding might seriously be attempted for all citizens. If this were to succeed even for a substantial minority, there could be far-reaching consequences for the quality of social and political life. Among those who accept the values of liberal education, it is often objected that engagement in such an education is simply beyond the capacity of many people. In various places in this book, I have duly acknowledged the difficulties. But if the ability to interpret, appreciate, and judge with critical discrimination in a broad range of human affairs is desirable for any human being, I believe it is worth emphasizing as the educational ideal for everyone. Human societies have always been conspicuous for their failure to achieve the ideals of justice proposed by philosophers, but this has not deterred philosophers from continuing to advocate their ideals. The reality would possibly be worse if it were not for the challenging and accusing presence of these ideals. Something similar might be said for a normative theory of education.

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[1] J.V. D'Cruz and P.J. Sheehan, Culture and the Schools Commission in educational renewal; The renewal program: An overview. In J.V. D'Cruz and P.J. Sheehan (Eds), *The Renewal of Australian Schools* (2nd ed.). Hawthorn, Vic.: ACER, 1978, pp.7–10; 272–4.

Part I: The Study of Education

Since the beginning of this century, there has been an enormous expansion in education as a field of study. It now has a place in most universities as a distinct school or department. Despite its vigorous growth, the field has been afflicted by some deep problems. Principally these concern the nature and role of theory in relation to the practice of education (and the training of teachers) and the relationship between educational theory and the various disciplines on which it draws. Should educational theory be mainly instrumental to the immediate problems of practice? To the extent that it seeks to be more ambitious, how are explanatory, interpretative, and prescriptive elements to be combined? What unifying and distinguishing characteristics does education have as a field of study? Is it nothing more than a loose agglomeration of borrowings from various disciplines?

Some years ago, the study of education retreated from the attempt to develop a more or less integrated perspective on the basis of certain foundation disciplines. The desire of educational theorists to escape from superficiality, and the consequent low repute in which they were often held by other academics, led to the assiduous cultivation of each of the applied disciplines in its own right. There is no doubt that this change has raised the quality of work done in the name of history, philosophy, psychology, etc. of education. But there have been some undesirable tendencies, such as the splintering effect on education as a field of study, an orientation to the parent disciplines rather than to the practice of education, the use of inappropriate models of inquiry in the quest for rigour and reputation. (The last of these has also been a problem for the 'pure' social sciences.)

The first two chapters attempt to treat some of these questions and issues affecting educational studies. Chapter 1 criticizes the vogue that positivist methodology has enjoyed in much of the psychological and sociological study of education. In particular it draws attention to the value assumptions made by this methodology about rationality and human agency, and points out the serious shortcomings (especially for the study of education) of the 'value-free' doctrine that the methodology in a paradoxical fashion advocates. The chapter discusses some distinctive features of educational theory: its fundamentally normative role in relation to practice, and certain key concepts in which specifically educational phenomena are identified and described.

The second chapter examines the structure of education as a field of study, specifically in relation to the role of philosophy. It is argued that education is not a distinct unitary discipline nor simply an accumulation of applied disciplines. While it is a multidisciplinary field, there is an integrating core of educational inquiry that employs a range of distinct concepts and draws on the contributing disciplines in developing normative theory for the interpretation and guidance of practice. While this level of inquiry is by no means an exclusively philosophical activity, it depends crucially upon philosophical skills. Philosophy, psychology, etc. of education will contribute most effectively to general educational theory when they respect the distinctive educational context in using key concepts and in framing the problems they investigate.

Chapter 1

Values in the Study of Education

It is often supposed that disputes about scientific methodology are strictly technical matters. Against this view, I wish to argue that they can involve a much wider range of normative issues: that they may even be ideological, in the sense that they import a particular interpretation of man which has serious consequences for moral and political action. I shall be concerned specifically with the influence of certain methodological assumptions in the social and behavioural sciences on the study and practice of education. As an aspect or extension of this discussion, I shall refer to the policy of treating educational research as simply a smorgasbord of applied disciplines, and shall suggest some characteristics of distinctively educational inquiry.[1]

The Positivist Methodology and its Values

Over the past few decades, certain assumptions about the methodology appropriate for a truly scientific study of human behaviour and society have been predominant. Inevitably these assumptions have left their mark on a large proportion of that vast quantity of educational research which has been done within the framework of social and behavioural science. Probably the most fundamental methodological doctrine concerns the characteristics of rational scientific explanation. What has been widely adopted, in effect if not by design, is the epistemology of logical positivism. According to this view, the ingredients of a rational scientific explanation consist of formal validity along with a set of propositions verified by observation.

This doctrine includes the following more specific tenets. It treats mathematical physics as the model of all scientific inquiry (although it does not really provide for the theoretical concepts of physics). It exhaustively classifies propositions as being true either in virtue of their logical form or on the basis of observation. It makes intersubjective agreement the critical condition for reliable and unbiased evidence. A specific aspect of this emphasis on intersubjectivity is the preoccupation with operational definition. Finally the doctrine endorses a logical gulf between value claims and matters of fact. This belief underlies various accounts of 'value-free' scientific inquiry.

Without attempting a general critique of these assumptions about the nature and method of social and behavioural science, I wish to highlight some of the value judgments that are at least implicit in them, and to indicate the effects of such judgments on education, both as a practice and a field of inquiry.

(i) To insist, in the study of human behaviour and institutions, on the conditions of knowledge and explanation that may only be satisfied in physical science, is to devalue a considerable range of other claims to knowledge. Statements of probability have to be treated as inferior knowledge claims; historical explanation, unless it can trump up general covering laws, is hardly thought to be knowledge at all; in general, any kind of knowledge into which personal experience enters is downgraded. The declining fortunes of history of education as a field of study clearly illustrate the influence of this attitude. Yet, as Michael Scriven has recently emphasized, it provides one of our best sources of knowledge for the intelligent planning and implementing of educational programs. For what we can learn from history is a range of significant possibilities in human affairs.[2]

The physical science model also encourages rather narrow views on the nature of explanation. It tends to be assumed, for example, that there is such a thing as the explanation which exists independently of any human context. This ignores the fact that there are many levels and types of explanation for any phenomenon. What is appropriate depends on such circumstances as background knowledge and human purposes. A sociological or psychological study of a particular aspect of education may or may not yield educationally relevant explanations. It is often supposed, moreover, that the only worthwhile explanation is one that has very specific predictive power. For this reason, the kind of theory that provides a ground for predicting only a broad pattern of likely features is neglected—precisely the kind of theory that is feasible when one is dealing with the enormously complex phenomena of human society.

This last point is the fundamental issue, for the most general assumption of the approach I am discussing is that individual and social human behaviour is of the sort that can be adequately studied by the methods of physical science. Apart from the moral significance of this view (made quite explicit in, for example, B.F. Skinner's writing), I am suggesting here that at the very least it downgrades certain types of knowledge and explanation. The irony of this position is, I believe, that it excludes what seem to be our only effective ways of understanding when faced with the staggering complexity of independent variables in the practice of education or any other human institution.

(ii) When what can be known to be true is made to depend on either formal logical rules or observation, there is no place for statements that are true in virtue of the meaning of their terms. The requirement of observation is also extended to propositions whose truth is not settled by definition, but which, at the same time, do not need to be established by experiment. In the Kantian terminology, there is no place for synthetic *a priori* propositions.

It follows from this belief about what can be known to be true that conceptual analysis or reasoning is underestimated and neglected. A practical consequence of this neglect in educational (and other) research has been the immense effort devoted to the empirical demonstration of truisms and invincible hypotheses, and the tendency to confuse technical redescriptions with explanations. The following are examples of these practices.

In E.R. Hilgard's widely used *Theories of Learning*, one comes across these conclusions for education: 'Brighter people can learn things less bright ones cannot learn'; 'a motivated learner acquires what he learns more readily than one who is not motivated'.[3] B.R. Bugelski in *The Psychology of Learning Applied to Teaching* provides even more startling examples of the obvious. He solemnly advises teachers, on the basis of the major learning theories of the twentieth century, that they should 'take the temperamental disposition of the learner into account'; that they should 'not be content with rough approximations where specific answers or responses are essential for subsequent success'; that they should not 'teach a higher level operation without the lower level equipment or background'.[4] From a teacher's point of view, these utterances provide no advice but merely state in general terms some familiar pedagogical problems.

Invincible hypotheses abound in the literature of educational research.

Here are some illustrations taken from research on concept formation and meaningful learning: 'Cues for a class of stimuli can transfer to other instances within the class.' (But how could they be cues for a class of stimuli if transfer did not occur?) 'The kind of verbal cues used by a teacher to direct problem solving affects learning retention and transfer.' (Could we seriously hypothesize that this would not be the case?) 'Meaningful material rich in association is learnt in much less time than material without associations.'[5]

In this general area of research, two psychologists who react against the prevailing epistemology are nevertheless subject to its influence in their work. D.P. Ausubel follows the causal pattern of analysis in attempting to show empirically that learning can be facilitated when the material to be learnt is organized in a logical and meaningful way and is related conceptually to what has already been learnt. Jean Piaget has also expended considerable energy in demonstrating empirically that among normal human beings there is a development in intellectual capacity, from an ability to deal with simple concrete concepts and operations to those that are complex and abstract. (Given our ordinary experience and what we mean by the terms 'concrete', 'abstract', 'development', 'growth', could we seriously suppose that there might be no progression of this kind or that the process might go in the opposite direction?)

Finally, for examples of redescription in the guise of explanation, there is the concept of centration in Piaget's theory and the notions of reinforcement and stimulus generalization in behavioural theory.

In the atomism of the epistemology still prevalent in social and behavioural science, all connections between events are contingent, and explanation consists of causal connections which are simply observed regularities. These assumptions lead inevitably to distortion as when the relationship between concept and object or knowledge and perception is treated as though it were a purely contingent one; and they leave no place for teleological explanations of human behaviour.

(iii) Given the doctrines of atomism and pure objectivism, and the efforts of rigorous operationalism to eliminate any reference to mental states and activities, it is inevitable that the active role of the observer in scientific research would be grossly underestimated. Yet what we perceive cannot be considered apart from the theories and concepts we possess. The features that may contribute to an explanation of a phenomenon are by no means obvious, there simply to be seen. We may as yet lack the conceptual resources for an adequate explanation. From among the virtually endless possible correlations in a given case, we have to decide what may reasonably be expected to constitute an explanation. To claim that A is the cause of B is a highly selective process, an exercise of judgment.[6] Again it is important to notice here the intrusion of a form of reasoning that is not accommodated by the model of research being discussed.

One of the consequences of the above doctrines has been the preoccupation with the logic of built theories. Because of the bias against acknowledging the personal experience of the investigator, the logic of discovery has been neglected. This has had serious repercussions not only for educational research generally, but also for the study and practice of education in relation to the processes of reasoning that are involved in scientific and other forms of inquiry.

(iv) In the tradition to which I am referring, the stress on operational definition does not simply reflect concern that there should be observable symptoms and other evidence for the claims we make. Rather it expresses the conviction that observable phenomena are all that there is to be studied. In relation to human beings specifically, it holds that all mental activity can be adequately described in terms of observable bodily movements and environmental conditions. In this view, a flushed face and trembling voice are not simply the behavioural features that may justify our concluding that someone is angry; they are all that being angry is. This policy blurs completely the distinction between a symptom and what it points to; between bodily movement and human action. It is at one with the principle of pure objectivism in exorcising man as subject and person from scientific inquiry. He must be treated solely as an object.

In the present context, the most significant aspect of operationalism is its dismissal of the explanatory value of reasons for acting in favour of causal explanation on the model of physical science. One cannot adopt this policy consistently without treating the rationality of human beings as of little or no account.

The devaluing of reasons for acting in the study of human behaviour has not, of course, been confined to the strict empiricists. In their own ways, psychoanalysts and the various exponents of social and historical determinism have also discredited the appeal to reasons. I should stress here that I am not denying the significance of environmental and other conditions in the explanation of human behaviour, or suggesting that people are never mistaken about their real reasons for acting. What I am criticizing is the policy of treating reasons as invariably rationalizations, or of denying that reasons for acting can ever provide a real explanation and assuming that the latter is to be found exclusively in the physical conditions of behaviour. To follow such a line in social and behavioural research is to promote a distinct interpretation of man that has obvious consequences for moral and political action.

Such consequences will often follow even when the reasons given for acting are not discounted as a matter of general policy, but because the evidence in the particular case seems to warrant it. Consider, for example, the explanation of the student protest movement of the 1960s offered by many social scientists in the United States. Whether ideologically committed to the empiricist methodology or not, they concluded that the protests were not really because of concern over various injustices, but were a function of such conditions as location and size of institutions—a comforting conclusion for those who would be embarrassed if the charges of injustice were taken seriously.

The most obvious and significant influence of operationalism on educational research has come through the various behaviourist theories of learning. One specific aspect that deserves some attention is the preoccupation with behaviourally defined objectives. It has had a serious effect not only on curriculum research but also on the practice of teaching and learning. If the present liaison in the United States between accountability and behaviourally defined objectives succeeds, the effect on teacher training and educational practice will be even more profound.

I am not concerned here with a general criticism of the policy of behavioural objectives. The point I wish to stress is that, when adopted as a basic procedure, it does carry important normative consequences. Once the stress is on a precisely measurable and identifiable behavioural change in the learner, preference is inevitably given to those learning outcomes that can be treated in such a way. Yet the outcomes that can be precisely measured are usually not the most significant ones from an educational point of view. Even in relation to a relatively specific skill such as reading, the aspects of achievement that can be precisely measured form only a part of the educational objective. Teaching will also tend to be restricted to just those procedures that effectively elicit the range of specific behavioural responses. It is one thing to rely on behavioural features as observable signs or aspects of, say, understanding. It is quite a different matter to treat them as the objectives of teaching. In fact, once this happens, the behaviours induced cease to be reliable guides to understanding. Children can learn to make facial expressions, give answers, set out the steps in a mathematical proof, and so on, as though they understood.[7]

The 'Value-free' Doctrine

That the social sciences should be 'value-free' is one of the most distinctive characteristics of the methodology under discussion. Because this belief is so directly related to the topic of this chapter, I shall comment on it more fully. The value-free thesis has been preoccupied with moral and political values. To a large extent, it is based on the assumption that the holding of these values is a purely subjective matter, that there is no public evidence by which a value claim might be tested–in general terms, the doctrine of the complete separation of facts and values. In the interests of objectivity, the social scientist is to proceed without making any moral or political value assumptions, and the only proper role of social science in relation to such values is to describe and explain in a way that leaves the normative questions untouched.

This pure form of the value-free thesis has recently undergone some modification. In the revised version, it is acknowledged that a scientist's values influence his choice of topics for research, and that values determine the application of scientific knowledge. But the situation is basically the same. It is still supposed that moral judgments do not enter into the substance of social scientific inquiry, and that the findings bear no consequences for the values one may hold. They simply enable us to determine the most efficient means to the ends we desire. This is an attitude that has been fairly common in educational research. In its crude form, it simply says: 'Let those who have authority over educational policy tell us what kind of end product they want, and we will devise the most effective means of getting it'.

Up to this point, I have commented mainly on the value assumptions about rationality and knowledge in the methodology derived from logical positivism. The negative view it takes on the status of moral judgment as knowledge is a further example of this kind. The issue cannot, however, be confined to the domain of epistemic value, for the very policy of excluding moral questions as such from the scope of the social sciences inevitably has had a profound effect on moral thought and practice. In this respect, science has conspired, during the present century, with certain otherwise quite alien movements in promoting the attitude that values are not accountable to public criteria of reasoned inquiry, but are simply matters of private feeling.[8] The policy also has had the practical consequence of ensuring that the prevailing values of the society are not disturbed by scientific investigation.

Anything like a comprehensive treatment of the question of moral values and science is beyond the scope of this chapter. What I wish to do is, first, to draw attention to ways in which social scientific theories do, in fact, suppose or favour certain moral judgments, and second to indicate briefly why this must be so.

I shall illustrate the first of these points through some examples: two works in political theory (discussed at length by Charles Taylor[9]) and Durkheim's educational theory.

(i) S.M. Lipset in his book, *Political Man,* takes the existence of class and of class conflict as basic political facts, and distinguishes various types of society according to the pattern of class interaction. In one form of society, all the classes are articulate but their conflict is expressed in violence which is contained only by ruthless suppression; in another form of society, one group dominates peacefully but only because other classes have not become articulate; in a third form of society, class interests are fully expressed but conflicts are peacefully resolved through a political system in which all freely assent to a government determined by the majority, yet constrained by the recognition of minority rights. The last describes the democratic political order, the one which Lipset believes –as he tells us at the conclusion of his book–is 'the good society itself in operation'. The crucial point to notice here is that, if the basic elements of his scientific analysis are correct (i.e. about the inevitability of classes and of class conflict), the question of whether democracy is the most desirable form of society can hardly be in doubt. In Lipset's theory, the only other options one has are either violent or benevolent repression.

(ii) In Harold Lasswell's view, social scientific inquiry is 'policy science'. It is concerned with the efficiency of means, and is thought to be neutral in relation to the ends that are served. In *Power and Society,* which he wrote with Abraham Kaplan, it is stated in the introduction that they are providing only 'the empirical propositions of political science' and not 'the value judgments of political doctrine'. However, things do not turn out this way in the book. For example, one of the dimensions of variation used for characterizing a political society is the extent to which it is libertarian or authoritarian—also a dimension commonly employed in measuring the school environment. They apply the terms in the following way: 'A rule is libertarian where initiative, individuality, and choice are widespread: authoritarian if obedience, conformity, and coercion are characteristic'. As Taylor points out:

> the value force here is more than a question of wording. It lies in the type of alternative which is presented to us: on the one hand, a man can be manipulated by others, obeying a law and standards set up by others which he cannot judge; on the other hand, he is developed to the point where he can judge for himself, exercise reason, and apply his own standards; he comes to respect himself and is more capable of respecting others. If this is really the alternative before us, how can we fail to judge freedom better (whether or not we believe there are overriding considerations)?[10]

Analogous points may be made in relation to other dimensions used by Lasswell and Kaplan: for example, the degree to which a political order is impartial (i.e. exhibits justice); the degree to which it is juridical rather than tyrannical. Now, when the authors go on to describe democracy as a political order that is libertarian, impartial, and juridical, their 'empirical propositions' have made an overwhelming case for the moral superiority of democracy as a form of government.

The artificiality of the distinction based on value grounds between means and ends is evident when one tries to apply it to Lasswell's work. The kind of conclusion he reaches would have to be stated in this fashion: 'If you happen to be committed to democracy, promote the development of the kind of person who can judge for himself, who has sufficient self-respect to respect others and the like'. Again the point is that, once you accept that this is the sort of person called for in a democratic society, you cannot really remain uncommitted to the value of democracy. On this issue, Taylor observes that we can no more be morally indifferent to a policy science of tyranny than we can to a medical science whose purpose is to produce and spread disease.

(iii) In the study of education specifically, one of the most comprehensive examples of the interplay between explanatory and normative theory is provided by the work of Emile Durkheim. In his explanatory scheme, schooling is a strictly conservative socializing process, an instrument of a society's collective conscience at any given time. The educational system cannot but reflect the state of the collective conscience, and so it would be futile to suppose that the school could act effectively as the primary agent in changing a system of values or in reinstating one that had begun to break down. But this account is normative as well, for a society's collective conscience is the ultimate source of moral authority for the practice of education within that society. It is the duty of the school to shape the new generation according to the ideal of man that is sanctioned by the collective conscience and, even if the school could effectively promote a different ideal, its use in this way would be morally unjustifiable.

Whether Durkheimian or not, many empirical studies have interpreted education as being predominantly a process of socialization. Given the typical basic concepts (such as 'equilibrium', 'organic whole') and the model of physical causal explanation, the socialization theory is loaded with moral implications. In addition to passing judgment on the kind of learning that is of most worth it promotes an ideal of the self in which each individual is totally dependent on the group. Complex relationships among human beings are transposed into independent group forces exercising causal influence on individual behaviour. In this scheme of things, it is difficult to see how we can speak sensibly of personal moral responsibility, or what grounds there could be for challenging the morality of the social status quo.

The second general point I wish to make about the value-free thesis is that there are good reasons why serious efforts at explaining human behaviour must involve moral judgments. Here, I shall mention in summary form two such lines of reasoning.

(i) Human needs, wants, and purposes have such an important bearing on the way people act that some account of what they are must be included in any framework for explaining human behaviour. At the same time, the fulfilment of human needs, wants, and purposes is inextricably linked with judgments about what is morally good. Thus the priorities in human needs that are assumed in an explanatory framework inevitably determine priorities of moral evaluations. Moreover a social scientist cannot establish a relationship between what he is examining and the satisfaction or frustration of human needs, wants, and purposes, without thereby making an evaluation.

(ii) Moral beliefs and actions form an integral and fundamental part of the phenomena studied by the behavioural and social sciences, but they cannot be recognized or employed in descriptions and explanations unless the social scientist himself applies criteria for appraising the moral character of beliefs and actions. In this task, it is not possible simply to rely upon such formulas as 'what are commonly thought to be moral standards by the members of this group'. To understand anything adequately entails critical evaluation. Thus one cannot properly understand human behaviour in which moral and other value judgments play a crucial role without critically evaluating the nature and significance of these judgments.

In theorizing about human actions, the only chance of success for the policy of 'value neutrality' would be to study man at a radically different level as, for example, on the model of a computer or in terms of biochemistry. But, as one writer notes, 'to reduce culture to physics is to decompose humanity into parts, and thus into something other than the study of man or society'.[11]

Apart from radically altering the object of inquiry in this way, social scientists may avoid value assumptions and consequences–at least significant ones–by eschewing the effort to theorize and by concentrating instead on piecemeal descriptions (opinion polls, surveys, and the like). There are, no doubt, some elements of theory and value judgments even in this activity, but the findings are of such limited range that they are often compatible with quite diverse theoretical frameworks. This level of inquiry, which has been very widely practised in educational research, reflects the desire to live by the value-free doctrine. Such inquiry may yield very useful results, but in itself it does not develop educational or any other kind of theory. This is a severe price to pay for doctrinal purity.

Characteristics of Distinctively Educational Research and Theory

I have referred so far to a number of important value preferences that the methodology implicit in much educational research carries with it. The methodology also shapes the way in which the general nature of educational research and theory is interpreted. The most obvious evidence of this influence is the attempt to treat educational research as a strictly non-normative scientific form of inquiry. A large amount of research has concentrated on statistical descriptions in which, often enough, the choice of variables has reflected the effort to avoid moral issues. When the task has been the building of significant theory, educational phenomena have been subjected to the deductive-nomological model of explanation and prediction appropriate to the subject matter of physical science.

A second feature of the prevailing approach is that it provides no place for distinctively educational theory. We are left with nothing more than an accumulation of the theories about education that are developed from the perspectives of the various social and behavioural sciences. What I have already tried to show is that these perspectives, reflecting as they often do the methodological assumptions of logical positivism, systematically eliminate the characteristics that distinguish education as a human practice. They either reduce intentions, purposes, and other mental activities to bodily movements or suppose that the relationship of mental activities to the observable features of behaviour is a purely causal one. They disregard the criterion of 'type justification' that affects the appropriateness of an explanation[12]; that is, they take no account of the specific point of view of those engaged in the practice of education. The level of their explanation is geared to the requirements of like-minded social and behavioural scientists, but not to those of educators. Finally they import key concepts into the study of education without regard to the normative criteria that distinguish the educational point of view.

In relation to this last practice, the concept of learning itself provides what is probably the most perspicuous example. The use of retention as the basic criterion in so many studies of learning, the effort expended in demonstrating that learning with understanding is preferable to sheer memorization because it is retained longer, the large number of experiments in verbal learning that have used groups of words (or nonsense syllables) without reference to the possibly significant influence of grammatical structure, the lack of attention given to the more complex intellectual activities in science and the arts that are central to deliberate education (in contrast, for example, to the vast amount of work on IQ)–these clearly show how insensitive researchers can be to the normative criteria for distinguishing what counts as educational learning from what might be called learning in various other contexts. One may even doubt whether learning theorists generally are talking about the same thing as educators. As one of the commentators on this issue has noted:

> Most learning theorists, given the general pervasiveness of at least a methodological behaviourism, will see more or less mechanical stimuli and responses; whereas most educators, given the teleological concepts of ordinary language, see goals and actions as purposive.[13]

This state of affairs is not restricted to the psychological study of learning. A specific example may be taken from a sociologist of education, Robert Dreeben, in his work on the contribution of schooling to the learning of norms.[14] One of his general claims is that children learn social norms as much from their direct experiences of the school setting as from deliberate teaching. However, in developing his case, he fails to distinguish various types of norm that could be involved, and thus ignores the differences there might be in relation to each type between learning incidentally and learning through teaching. Nor is there any attention given to the quality of learning. To say that a child learns a norm could mean anything from a subtle form of conditioning in which behavioural conformity is achieved without any conceptual grasp of the norm, up to a clear understanding of what the norm is, what kind of norm it is, how it is justified, and how it may be applied and acted upon with due regard for varying circumstances. Not all instances of learning are educative: some of the ones which could be accommodated within Dreeben's framework should be classed, I think, as miseducative on the basis of moral and educational values.

Similar comments could be made on the concept of teaching in educational research. To describe one person's observable behaviour as 'teaching', simply because it is causally related to an enduring change in the observable behaviour of another, is to overlook the normative conditions affecting method and content that must be satisfied if an activity is to count as teaching in an educational sense. Even when the learning outcome satisfies educational criteria, it does not follow that any so-called teaching activity that effectively contributes to the learning is acceptable as teaching from an educational point of view. We may, for example, learn tolerance from the rantings of a racist.

The alternative interpretation of the study of education, implicit in these various criticisms, is that it can and should be treated as a field of inquiry in its own right. Several general features of educational research in this interpretation have already emerged indirectly during the course of the present discussion. I shall conclude by stating them here more explicitly, but without attempting to face the difficulties of detail.

In the first place, distinctively educational theory is of a normative kind. Because education is a deliberate effort to promote the learning of beliefs, attitudes, and skills thought to be of significant human value, one cannot study it as a human phenomenon without having regard for what will improve it. (Compare, for example, research on practices intended to safeguard or restore mental health.) Educational theory is normative both in the technical sense of providing prescriptions for the efficient conduct of education and in the moral sense of defending an ideal of what the practice of education should be like, and of criticizing existing practices and objectives in the light of this ideal.[15] The evaluation of teaching and learning practices, curriculum programs, institutional arrangements, government policies, and so on forms an essential part of educational research, but it cannot be simply, or even primarily, an exercise in tests and measurements, however sophisticated the techniques. To be humanly significant, such evaluations must include arguments and judgments about political, moral, and aesthetic values and about the kind of learning that is worthwhile. Educational theory does not include every dimension of value. In fact, what is educationally valuable may be in conflict with other values. For example, a certain maximum class size might be desirable on educational grounds but not desirable from an economic point of view.

Secondly the central object of distinctively educational research is the range of teaching and learning that belongs to the practice of education. A study of education as education must accept its main concepts (teaching and learning and the whole web of concepts that is formed around them) with the normative force they have in the complexly interrelated pattern of human activities that comprises the process of education. As in the case of such practices as science and morality, what counts as education is not simply what is being done or has been done at any time in the name of education; it also involves ideals. Teaching and learning that claim to be educational must satisfy the normative criteria of knowledge and understanding, and are subject also to moral and aesthetic standards. The practice of education and its institutional forms may be studied with or without regard to this context of normative conditions. It is precisely when this context is taken into account that they form the object of distinctively educational inquiry.

Thirdly I would suggest that educational research is distinguished from psychological, sociological, and other studies of education by characteristics of method. Several features have already been mentioned in the criticism of alternatives. What seems to be the most important of these features may be summarized as follows:

(i) Given the normative nature of educational theory, it is obvious that the procedures of moral and practical reasoning must play a prominent part in the building of such theory.

(ii) There is also a considerable range of educational questions for which conceptual and logical analysis, rather than empirical testing, is the appropriate method. I have already mentioned the scope of such analysis in avoiding experiments on invincible hypotheses. It is part of this process to bring to light just what the educational question really is in a given case and just what aspects depend on empirical research. Take, for example, the question of whether learning by independent discovery is superior to learning by instruction. Clearly there are many conceptual issues here: Can the question in its general form be intelligibly raised? Are these the only alternatives? What are the criteria for counting learning as superior? Is retention a sufficient criterion? Could anyone seriously propose that independent discovery be accepted as a general normative principle of learning for human beings?[16]

The adequate employment of conceptual analysis depends, among other things, on recognizing that 'analyticity' is not simply a matter of logical form but also of meaning relative to a context of use, and that what is being examined is not a word game but an activity of which language forms an integral part.[17]

Conceptual and logical inquiry also contributes to educational research in more positive ways. It is indispensable for distinguishing criteria and procedures for various processes of reasoning: whether one is thinking about a scientific problem or trying to reach a moral decision or coming to an intelligent appraisal of a poem. In relation to the outcomes of teaching and learning, it establishes the truth conditions for whatever claims are made to the effect that someone now knows or understands such-and-such. This would not be so important if methods of teaching and learning could be adequately investigated in isolation from content. At least in the educational setting such a division is not feasible for, in order to be educative, the activities of teaching and learning must be intended to issue in knowledge and understanding.

In arguing for the distinctiveness of educational inquiry as I have done, I do not wish to imply that methods and findings of empirical research do not have an integral place or that the study of education from the point of view of any social or behavioural science may not contribute to distinctively educational theory. If a developmental psychologist establishes that there is a typical sequence in the acquisition of certain conceptual skills, this knowledge must have implications for teaching and learning, although, in this case, the more specifically educational issue is whether the pattern can be accelerated or changed by deliberate pedagogical intervention—and, if so, whether such a course of action is desirable. In general, knowing what can be done is obviously crucial in deciding what, in the present circumstances, should be done;

and given the rejection of a total logical gap between facts and values, knowing what in fact is the case or what consequences follow from a certain procedure may be relevant grounds for a normative decision. The formation of sound educational policy will commonly depend on fairly specific causal explanations—but ones that do not ignore the place of reasons and purposes in human behaviour. I hope that the critical comments of this chapter have at least indicated the methodological assumptions that are likely to facilitate or hinder a constructive relationship between empirical research and educational theory.

If the earlier criticism of the value-free doctrine is correct, the gap between educational theory (as normative) and systematic psychological, sociological, and other (mainly explanatory) theories of education is not an absolute one. The general point I have been getting at is that whatever methodological decisions one makes in the study of man, they are fraught with value; in these decisions one cannot escape interpretative assumptions about the nature of man. Values also enter by way of the key concepts employed, and they do this to a significant degree in so far as one attempts to build a coherent scientific theory.

It follows that social scientific theories of education, even when they thoroughly reflect the tenets of positivistic methodology, are always to some extent prescriptive for educational practice. Apart from the obvious objection one may raise to crypto-normative theorizing, what I wish to stress in this context is that theories based on the positivist methodology, such as Skinner's behaviourism, are not strictly educational theories, precisely because they prescribe the denial or elimination of the characteristics that would mark out as distinctively educational the practices of teaching and learning. They are of a kind with theories that explain such other practices as morality, religion, science, and literature as being quite different from what those who engage in them suppose them to be. This kind of theory can only ironically be given the name of the practice it in effect interprets as something else.

Although I have questioned the methodology typical of this approach, I have not provided a conclusive argument against the claim that education should be interpreted in terms of, say, Skinnerian behaviourism or socialization theory. What I have just tried to show is that such a claim in effect rejects distinctively educational theory as being a misguided enterprise.

As a concluding note I should stress the practical implication for training in educational research of the view I have defended. In this view, it is obviously not sufficient for a person to be trained in the methods and theories of a social or behavioural science. Yet graduate faculties of education tend to be preoccupied with precisely this kind of training. They would be happy to hear that their doctoral program in, say, sociology of education could not be distinguished from that of a sociology department except perhaps for a somewhat narrower range of interests. I do not wish to belittle such an achievement. It is immeasurably preferable to the shallow amateurism that so often afflicts the study of education. But it is not an adequate training for distinctively educational research.

At least two additional components are required. First, the study of experimental methods, research designs, and the use of statistics and computers should be set in the context of a critical reflection on methodology that is sensitive to the distinguishing characteristics of educational phenomena—not just a general philosophy of psychology and social science, but philosophy of educational research. This cannot be done properly without examining the key concepts that are employed in the practice of education, and their normative theoretical context. Second, the acquisition of experimental skills should be supplemented by systematic work in logical and conceptual analysis and in the procedures of moral and practical argument.

When all these ingredients are put together, we may expect the kind of theory that is not only empirically well founded but directed to improving the quality of educational practice.

Notes and References

[1] In the preparation of this paper, I have been particularly influenced by and have drawn on the work of R.D. Sleep in an unpublished doctoral thesis which I supervised at the University of Toronto. The title of the thesis is Epistemology and aims in education: A study of the foundations and aims of educational inquiry, 1970. Parts of the thesis have been published as Theory, methodology, and research on learning: An epistemological impasse in educational inquiry, *Focus on Learning*, 1972, 2(1), 5-30.
I also wish to acknowledge the general influence of the chapter by Michael Scriven, Objectivity and subjectivity in educational research, In *Philosophical Redirections of Educational Research: The Seventy-First Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, Part I, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972, 94-142. I have commented on this chapter in *Educational Theory*, 1973, 23(2), 166-67.

[2] Scriven, op.cit., pp.115-116.

[3] E.R. Hilgard, *Theories of Learning*. London: Methuen, 1958, p.486.

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[4] B.R. Bugelski, *The Psychology of Learning Applied to Teaching*. New York: Holt, 1956.

[5] The quotations (in order) are taken from *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1964, **55**(4), p.195; ibid., 1963, **54**(2), p.85; *Teachers College Record*, 1957, **58**, pp.331-32. They are among the many examples discussed in Sleep, op.cit., pp.17-20.

[6] For an elaboration of this point see R.H. Ennis, The responsibility of a cause, In B. Crittenden (Ed.), *Philosophy of Education 1973*, Edwardsville, Illinois: Philosophy of Education Society, 1973, 86-93.

[7] See L.J. Waks, Philosophy, education and the doomsday threat, *Review of Educational Research*, 1969, **39**(5), 615-618. The same author has recently written more fully on behavioural objectives in Re-examining the validity of arguments against behavioural goals, *Educational Theory*, 1973, **23**(5), 133-143.

I discuss behavioural objectives and curriculum evaluation in Process or Product in Curriculum Evaluation? in Part Three of this volume.

[8] Cf. J. Shaar and S. Wolin, Education and the technological society, *New York Review of Books*, 9 October 1969, p.4.

[9] In the discussion of the 'value-free' doctrine I am especially indebted to C. Taylor, Neutrality in political science, In P. Laslett and W.G. Runciman, *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967, 25-57; and L.I. Krimerman, (Ed.), In *The Nature and Scope of Social Science: A Critical Anthology*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969, pp.691-703. The first argument on the inescapable role of values in social science is based on Taylor, the second on Krimerman.

Similar arguments are also summarily presented by Michael Polanyi in The message of the Hungarian revolution, In M. Grene (Ed.), *The Anatomy of Knowledge*, Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1969, 158-59.

[10] Taylor, op.cit., p.45.

[11] Robert Redfield paraphrased by I.L. Horowitz, Establishment sociology: The value of being value-free, *Inquiry*, 1963, **6**, p.137.

[12] See M. Scriven, The covering law position: A critique and an alternative analysis, In Krimerman, op.cit., pp.96-97.

[13] H. Petrie, *The Logical Effects of Theory on Observational Categories and Methodology in Verbal Learning Theory*, Monograph for US Office of Education, 1970, p.12.

[14] R. Dreeben, The contribution of schooling to the learning of norms, *Harvard Educational Review*, 1967, **37**(2), 211-37.

[15] See J. Bruner, *The Relevance of Education*. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1974, p.115.

[16] See Sleep, op.cit., pp.23-26.

[17] See J. Kovesi, *Moral Notions*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967, p.42.

Chapter 2

Philosophy in Educational Theory

I

An obvious difficulty one has in approaching this topic is that there is scarcely any firm ground from which to move. The terms I have used in the title are, to say the least, contentious. The nature of philosophy is itself a perennial object of philosophical inquiry. During the present century, it has taken on the status of a major problem particularly among philosophers in the British tradition. Very broadly speaking, there were first various phases of excessive zeal in cutting philosophy down to what was thought to be its proper size, then a growing confidence tempered by the recent experiences of self-mortification. A good example of this trend is provided by social or political philosophy. As recently as 20 years ago, people were talking about its death. By 1967, the editors of *Philosophy, Politics and Society* (Series 3) were confident that it was indeed alive and well. In the course of the volume, I believe there is only one mention of the obituary notice and it happens to be critical of the foolish assumption—that social philosophy should work in isolation from political science—which led people to think that the demise of social philosophy was even possible.

For a time during this century, it seemed that philosophy worthy of the name was to be confined to formal logic and the logical reconstruction of ordinary language in the image and likeness of what was taken to be the world structure. It was thought that if the latter task were achieved the cause of most traditional philosophical problems would be removed. Then philosophy was offered a limited but, it was assured, useful task in relation to the empirical sciences. It had the purely second-order formal work of attending to the logical scaffoldings which science employed. In this scheme the boundaries of meaning were set very neatly and, so it seemed, conclusively: 'Every intelligible proposition rests on sense experience unless it is an identity'. It followed that all metaphysical statements and value assertions were literally nonsense. However, from the beginning this position proved difficult to maintain in its pure form and was subject to continual modification.

A common theme in these two variations on the role of philosophy was the effort to analyse language in terms of ultimate irreducible units. In the first case, these ultimates were in the world and were to be reflected in the perfectly formed language; in the second, which rejected any valid inference from the structure of language to the structure of the world, the atomic units were within language itself–the protocol sentences. For a variety of reasons, many philosophers found both these versions of reductive analysis unsatisfactory. In particular, it was argued that they failed to respect the logical complexity of ordinary language and the vast variety of its uses, and thus did not provide an adequate method for dealing with the philosophical problems enmeshed in ordinary language.

This shift of emphasis enlarged but by no means settled the scope of philosophy. Disputes have continued as to whether it is simply a critical activity which has the therapeutic function of uncovering errors generated by the logical and grammatical features of language or an inquiry which yields some kind of knowledge; and, if it is an inquiry, whether it is purely second-order or can also arrive at substantive conclusions. There have been difficulties about the way in which the ordinary usage of a term is established and its bearing, when known, on the philosophical inquiry. There have also been misgivings about taking an actual form of language as the unquestionable datum. The connections of language with experience do suggest that there might be questions about its adequacy, particularly when there are competing forms of language. In other words, there is uneasiness about restricting philosophy to the purely descriptive task of sketching the logical contours and boundaries of concepts (to use the popular image), about the extent to which serious philosophy can safely indulge in neutrality. Questions have also been raised about the amount of disguised metaphysics that passes in the name of a procedural rule. In fact, recently the attitude towards metaphysics has become more tolerant and appreciative. There has been no inclination to reinstate ontological versions of metaphysics, but efforts at gaining a comprehensive and integrated view of the various conceptual schemes of technical inquiry and ordinary language and even the proposal of revisions have been recognized as genuinely philosophical. The extent to which revision is possible is, however, a debated question. Since the late 1960s, the interpretation of philosophy as a purely second-order activity has been substantially modified in practice. 'Applied' philosophy has once more become respectable, particularly in relation to moral and political issues.

According to Acton, the dominant philosophical movement is replaced, on the average, every 20 years. If anything, the pace has quickened somewhat in the twentieth century—at least in the procession of trends among English-speaking philosophers.

During this same period, the institutions of education have assumed enormous importance in the life of advanced industrial societies. As a consequence, the whole educational enterprise has been subjected to increasingly intensive study from almost every conceivable angle. 'Theory' has been used to cover the whole spectrum from a piece of advice for holding children's attention, to analyses of the school class as a social system, to attempts at rigorous hypothetico-deductive schemes. Educational theory may simply be trying to describe or explain the practice of education as it now is, or it may be a prescription for the most effective way of achieving some desired objective, or it may be proposing a radical reform of the whole undertaking, aims as well as procedures. In some efforts at theorizing, education is merely annexed to a foreign power; in others, it is treated as a confederation that absorbs immigrants and territory from other places. The nature of the confederation is disputed: it might be a mosaic or a melting pot, or something else again. Some even claim that educational theory forms a quite distinctive domain.

II

It is clear that, in proposing any conclusion about the role of philosophy in educational theory, we are taking a position (at least implicitly) on the nature both of philosophy and of educational theory. In order to cope with the subject in a manageable way, I shall discuss a number of positions that have been defended during the past 15 or so years. The questions have not always been specifically about the role of philosophy in educational theory, but they have been on themes that are closely enough related: for example, philosophy of education as a branch of philosophy, education as a distinct field of study. The many variations can, I think, be divided without too much distortion between those that are primarily interested in education as a field of study and those that refer directly to the practice of education. In relation to the first, at least three main interpretations of the nature of educational theory can be distinguished: as an autonomous discipline; as a synthesis of applied disciplines; as an aggregate of applied disciplines. In relation to the second focus of major interest, the practice of education, I shall examine versions of the somewhat enigmatic claim that philosophy of education is simply philosophy.

Education as an Autonomous Discipline

Two important and quite different statements of this view have been made by Foster McMurray and Marc Belth.[1] According to McMurray there is need for a discipline, with its own concepts and theories, between the basic social sciences and the practice of pedagogy. He argues that the present practice of applying philosophical doctrines and scientific theories to the conduct of education simply generates a state of theoretical chaos. It ignores the distinctive characteristics and unity of the educational process. No consistent educational theory emerges as a realistic guide for educational practice. The fundamental task for the educationalist—as distinct from the philosopher, psychologist, sociologist, and the rest—is to work out a unitary account of the distinguishing features of educative change. This is the province of inquiry which constitutes education as a separate discipline and determines what are educationally relevant questions.

In this task and in the study of more particular educational problems, it seems that the educational theorist employs a method which is neither strictly philosophical nor that of the social sciences. McMurray acknowledges the usefulness of logical analysis provided it is strictly substance free, and speaks of the self-consistent integration of knowledge from other disciplines (including philosophy) in the solution of educational problems. However he does not treat positively the method by which this self-consistent integration is achieved. In fact, it seems that once the concepts of the educational domain have been clarified, the method for resolving some educational questions will be predominantly philosophical, for others it will be sociological or psychological, etc., but it is not obvious how he thinks the crucial concepts are established.

McMurray is not successful in providing a clear blueprint for education as an autonomous discipline. He goes too far in his attempt to stress the uniqueness of educational action. However I believe he establishes at least one fundamental point: the study of various aspects of education by philosophy and the social sciences and history or the application of findings in these fields to education is not necessarily a contribution to educational theory. The enterprise of education generates its own criteria of relevance. A psychological theory of learning, for example, may be inappropriate as an explanation of learning in education. If nothing else, McMurray is offering the sound methodological advice that if one wishes to advance educational theory one should start with an educational question.

Marc Belth interprets the nature of education as an autonomous discipline rather more narrowly. He distinguishes between the objectives of the school and those of education. As distinct from a number of other things the school does, education is concerned with 'inventive intelligence': with the development, analysis, and use of theories, hypotheses, and the models from which thinking proceeds. As a discipline, education investigates the problems of improving the ability to think. It is inquiry into the methods of inquiry. He argues that, because methods derive from models and models are the functional expression of theories, the object of the discipline of education may be alternatively stated as being the role of models in thinking. There are two groups of models which it studies: those that form the essential subject-matter of the educational process and those that are about the process itself.

Leaving aside his interpretation of a model and the role he ascribes to it in thought, it seems that Belth's position, rather than being an outline for an autonomous discipline, is a way of organizing various aspects of philosophy in relation to the process of education. The inquiry into the substance of the process of education essentially involves general logical and epistemological questions about the nature of inquiry, together with the more specific modes of inquiry (mathematics, science, history, and so on). The unitary and distinctive character of the process of education (in the strict interpretation given) is sought in the role of comprehensive explanatory models. In Belth's view, these are devised and tested for adequacy in the light of the content contained in the process, so that the criteria are again essentially philosophical.

A fundamental source of difficulty with this view is the abstraction of knowledge and the acquisition of the skills involved in intelligent behaviour from the broad context of individual and social purposes and values. An adequate educational theory cannot ignore the institutional forms which the process of education takes or the full range of human values that affect this process. Hence, even for the role of philosophy, Belth's arrangement is too restricted. It does not give due weight to the ethical and social philosophical aspects. It can also be objected that educational theory, in part at least, prescribes how we should proceed in order to achieve desired goals, and that it is not simply an attempt to describe or explain what happens to be going on. In addition to assimilating suitable theories and models from psychology and other social sciences, it should also incorporate their findings to the extent that they constitute or support the methods and policies recommended. The findings of these disciplines may be more relevant to education than their models.

Educational Theory as a Synthesis of Applied Disciplines

Perhaps the best statement of this position is provided by Paul Hirst.[2] He argues that education as a distinctive discipline is directed to making practical judgments about the group of activities which are involved in the practice of education. The raw material which enters into these judgments is drawn from many fields of inquiry, including philosophy. Because of its concern with guiding decisions of practice, the discipline of education cannot be accurately regarded just as a form of scientific theory.

It is not clear from Hirst's article how the substantive and methodological elements of the various contributing disciplines are meshed together. He distinguishes between the kind of philosophy that produces a systematic body of beliefs and philosophy as strictly second-order inquiry. Quite properly, he rejects the once-popular, but now largely abandoned, practice of treating philosophical beliefs as higher-order principles in a deductive system that was supposed to issue in conclusion about the nature and practice of education. Apparently, however, such beliefs may be part of the raw material from which educational theory is fashioned. Hirst's own preference is for philosophy as second-order inquiry, which he believes can make both a 'formal' and a 'substantial' contribution to educational theory. The former consists in the clarification of the central concepts we employ in talking about education. Because education is a complex discipline demanding the integration of many areas of discourse, problems of meaning are particularly acute; the resolution of the meaning of technical terms that commonly takes place within a single science cannot be relied on here.

Hence the role of philosophy at this level is of special importance for the progress of educational theory. The substantive contribution is made in the sense that other spheres of second-order philosophical inquiry are germane to the formation of theory in education. Ethics and the philosophical study of the domains of inquiry that form the curriculum are obvious examples. Hirst's use of 'substantial' tends to be misleading because, in the relatively recent practice of philosophy, these beliefs unlike those of certain metaphysical systems have usually been formal in character. The precise relationship of philosophy to the development of distinctively educational theory is not examined. Hirst himself suggests that it would depend on a further analysis of how 'understanding of this kind [philosophical] enters into a theory concerned with the making of practical judgments'.[3]

While Hirst leaves the methodology of educational theory and the role of philosophy in an obscure state, he does emphasize an important, perhaps the central, aspect of educational theory: its preoccupation with practical judgment. It may be too much, however, to say that this is its exclusive concern; perhaps the efforts simply to explain some aspect of education may make a legitimate claim to being educational theory.

Educational Theory as an Aggregate of Applied Disciplines

While this position admits of a wide variety of interpretations, in general it locates the unity of education as a field of study not in the characteristics of the inquiry but solely in the set of related activities which constitute the practice of education. Like engineering and medicine, education is a profession which derives its laws and theories for practice from many applied disciplines.

In one version—supported, for example, by Israel Scheffler—there is some integration at the level of inquiry, namely, in the distinctive 'extralogical' vocabulary of education.[4] This approach probably differs only in degree from the one we have just discussed. Again philosophy has the special role of analysing and clarifying the concepts in which education is described. In addition to the reason given by Hirst, it should be noticed that many of these concepts have always been of special interest to philosophers: knowing, understanding, thinking, perceiving, feeling, intending, trying, etc. In many of its other aspects, philosophy would also be a more general contributor to the body of educational theory.

Another version of the position quite strictly takes the practical enterprise of education as the only bond of unity between the disciplines which study it. In fact, the unity is almost entirely nominal. Sociologists, psychologists, economists, political scientists, and so on severally apply the theories, laws, and concepts of their own discipline. Problems are not formulated from the viewpoint of the complex pattern of educational practice but from the conceptual perspective of the particular disciplines; even the most common terms like educating, training, learning change their meaning from one discipline to another. The result is fragmentation: as many kinds of theory in education as there are disciplines studying it. The point about this version is that it fairly accurately describes what is commonly done in university departments of education. In this way of studying education, 'theory' is typically understood in the scientific sense. Thus the main weight of attention is given to developing descriptive and explanatory theories rather than ones that are prescriptive and normative.[5]

What is the role of philosophy in this scheme of things? In one sense, any application of philosophy that relates to the practice of education is admissible, whether in the form of deductions from metaphysical claims about the nature of man and the world or in the use of analytical methods to resolve philosophically perceived educational problems. By a courteous extension of the term 'theory', the conclusions might be said to constitute philosophical theory of education. In other words, like psychology and sociology and other applied disciplines, philosophy could go about its own business of manufacturing its particular brand of educational theory.

Educational theory building is more commonly interpreted as a strictly scientific enterprise, at present far from the ideal of an interpreted axiomatic system but striving in that direction. In this context, philosophy might be considered relevant to the following aspects:

Methodological Problems that Arise in the Scientific Study of Education
This would involve the application of philosophy of science (and social science). Moreover, because many social scientists still believe in the myth of value-free science and in the value neutrality of means, they are not aware of the relevance that general value theory, ethics, and social philosophy might have for their scientific work.

The Setting of Educational Goals
In devising theoretically-based techniques, social scientists often insist that they are only competent to determine the most efficient means.

They look to the 'policy makers' to establish the desired ends. Sometimes it is even thought that philosophers have a place among the policy makers. At least they are usually looked to for the clarification of the often vaguely stated objectives. This has probably been the most common interpretation of the role of philosophy in education and of the division of labour between philosophy and the social sciences in its systematic study. It is basically the position that has been taken by a number of philosophers: for example, Max Black, C.J. Ducasse, William Frankena, D.J. O'Connor.[6]

The last of these devoted a whole book to the topic. Apart from the contribution of philosophy to the logical structure of scientific inquiry in education, O'Connor believes that it is almost entirely absorbed with the aims or ends of education. As Passmore[7] points out, O'Connor reaches this very limited conclusion by completely ignoring the direct interests of philosophy in the processes of education. The same neglect is evident in the other writers I have mentioned.

In a recent article[8], O'Connor defends much the same position as in his book. He still insists that 'theory' in the strict sense applies only to efforts at explanation on the model of the physical sciences, and thus that educational theory results from the attempts of various scientific disciplines to explain educational phenomena. He agrees that value judgments affect educational decisions, but they do not form a part of educational theory because they cannot fit into a common logical structure with empirical arguments. The most that can be claimed for the normative role of educational theory (in the strict sense) is that it may issue in technical prescriptions: that is, given an end that we agree is desirable, a scientific theory may indicate the most effective means for achieving it. In his general approach, O'Connor reflects the standard positivist view on the strictly second-order role of philosophy, on what counts as an explanation, and on the complete logical separation between factual and value claims. In his division of labour between scientific educational theory and the contribution of normative discourse, O'Connor draws too sharp a distinction between the means and ends of education.

Philosophy of Education is Simply Philosophy

This proposal is ambiguous. It could mean that the philosophically important questions about education are of such generality that they do not warrant a distinctive branch of philosophy called the 'philosophy of education'; they are handled as part of general philosophy. This is the conclusion that O'Connor and Black, for example, reach. The proposal could also be interpreted as meaning that the issues of education are so significant that philosophy must essentially be philosophy of education. Such an approach is illustrated, to a large extent, in Plato's philosophy, and even more thoroughly in John Dewey.

In *Democracy and Education,* Dewey observes that the tradition of European philosophy began with educational questions about the learning of virtue, that in order to answer these questions the discussion moved to the nature of knowledge, to the change from ignorance to wisdom, to change in general and so on. The inquiry was brought back to education with questions about instruction. Again this led off to an examination of the relationship between thought and action, intellectual and moral virtues, and to the problem of tension between education with its stress on theory and criticism and the general life of the community moulding its members to conformity of action according to the prevailing customs. Although the theoretical questions soon became detached from their practical context, European philosophy arose as 'a theory of educational procedure'.[9] Philosophy, education, and society according to Dewey stand in an intimate relationship and one cannot profitably undertake philosophical reform without attending to the others. His own effort at reconstruction is a return to philosophy as 'philosophy of education'. He emphasizes that the latter:

> . . . is not an external application of ready-made ideas to a system of practice having a radically different origin and purpose: it is only an explicit formulation of the problems of the formation of right mental and moral habitudes in respect to the difficulties of contemporary social life.[10]

The first way of interpreting the claim that philosophy of education is simply philosophy is, I believe, clearly mistaken. It rests, to some extent, on the assumption that because 'education' is not classifiable in the same way as 'science' or 'mathematics', it makes no sense to talk about 'philosophy of education'. This only shows that it makes no sense to suppose that 'philosophy of education' is exactly analogous to 'philosophy of science' or 'philosophy of mathematics'. The assumption is dogmatic and unthinking. Following it literally, one would have to discount such acceptable and respected fields of philosophical inquiry as philosophy of action, of law, of language, of religion (unless one stipulated 'theology'), of morality, of the political order and even philosophy of mind (or philosophical psychology). It is surely either trivially true or mistaken to observe that all these 'philosophies of' are simply philosophy (with a capital P).

The interpretation also tends to assume that, even for the purpose of application, the essential work of philosophy can be adequately accomplished at remote levels of generality. This ignores the important modifications that the particular context frequently forces on the mode of philosophical reasoning and the application of philosophical conclusions reached elsewhere. If one were following the interpretation, one might suggest that there is really no need for, say, philosophy of history and philosophy of social science; that after all one simply applies the conclusions of epistemology. However, when philosophers pay close attention to the practice of history or psychology, they find that the answers to certain common questions (e.g. What is explanation?) cannot simply be transferred, that there are some problems in these fields which do not arise even when attention is focused on problems of knowledge in the physical sciences. With more experience of the actual context, it has even been found that history cannot be treated merely as a social science. Finally it need hardly be pointed out that an applied field is not disqualified as legitimate in philosophy just because it draws on one or several existing applied fields in addition to philosophy pure and simple (whatever that may be). If this were the case, we would again be forced to reject most, if not all, 'philosophy of'.

These rejoinders do not demonstrate that there should be 'philosophy of education'. They do show that if education is of sufficient philosophical interest, there is no good reason in the practice of philosophy why it should not constitute a distinct area of inquiry.

The second interpretation—which makes education the central concern of philosophy—is obviously too restrictive. There are many philosophical questions directly related to education which may be discussed for their own sake or in some other context, and there are important philosophical questions which have little or no bearing on education. What Dewey's comments on the connections between philosophy and education show is that education has been viewed as an activity worthy of philosophical study; not just in the sense that it could be fitted into ready-made doctrines, but as a source of distinctive philosophical problems and a testing ground for solutions proposed in other settings. There are frequent illustrations of this last point in *Democracy and Education.* On the basis of his examination of the meaning of interest, for example, in the teaching-learning process, he criticizes the Cartesian and empiricist doctrines of mind and proposes an account of subject-matter, discipline, and intelligence ('not a peculiar possession of a person; but a characteristic of his activity') as an alternative to what he believes are the false consequences of these doctrines for education.[11] In Gilbert Ryle's *The Concept of Mind,* not only are most of the topics immediately relevant to education, but there are many sections in which he examines the logical aspects of educational activities (e.g. teaching) or explores some more general activity (e.g. understanding, intelligence, theorizing) as it occurs in the context of education. There are similar examples scattered through Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations.* In the well-known proposal for a revised program in epistemology towards the end of *The Concept of Mind,* Ryle outlines two aspects: the theory of the sciences ('the systematic study of the structure of built theories'), and the theory of learning, discovery, and invention. Of the latter he says:

> As there do exist the practice and the profession of teaching, there could exist a branch of philosophical theory concerned with the concepts of learning, teaching, and examining. This might be called 'the philosophy of learning', 'the methodology of education' or, more grandly, 'the Grammar of Pedagogy'. This would be the theory of knowledge in the sense of being the theory of getting to know. The study would be concerned with the terms in which certain episodes in the lives of individuals are described and prescribed for by teachers and examiners.[12]

I hope these brief references are sufficient to suggest that the practice of education is indeed of substantial philosophical interest and may thus reasonably constitute a distinctive branch of philosophy. Although the precise scope of philosophy of education might be difficult to settle, I find it an extraordinary thing, both on account of the historical connections and the nature of the case, that the viability of philosophy of education could be seriously questioned. No one, I suppose, has really doubted whether language—a complex human activity, subject to intensive scientific study, so closely related to thought and general human development, and of such social importance—deserves to be a special field of philosophical study. Why should anyone be more sceptical about education? It, too, is a complex human activity; it is subject to intensive scientific study; at its core, it is the deliberate process by which people are initiated into the basic modes of inquiry and organized bodies of knowledge; in any society beyond the primitive stage it involves radically important institutional forms. I think it can be claimed with justice that the onus of proof is on those who suggest that education does not deserve sustained philosophical study.

Before concluding this section, I wish to comment on one role of philosophy in respect to education that is commonly mentioned: the provision of a general perspective. In both interpretations of the claim that philosophy of education is simply philosophy, this in essence is what its role comes to. In the first, one could just as well substitute any other human enterprise for education. In the second, Dewey's position, philosophy develops directly in relation to the problems of education. His argument in its bare outline is this: while science presents the facts about the world, philosophy explicates the kind of permanent disposition to action that the world as disclosed by science exacts of us. Education is the process of forming these fundamental dispositions. Thus philosophy is the general theory of education.[13]

Metaphysical systems that make positive existence-claims about the ultimate nature of things also provide a general philosophical perspective for education, as they do for everything else. However, they are remote from the problems of education and at best justify broad emphases that are compatible with quite diverse practices. Even then they need to be taken as hypotheses or as metaphorical poetic-like interpretations; if they seek to be treated as literally true, they encounter philosophical arguments (beginning with Hume and Kant) that seem to be decisive.

Some contemporary philosophers have suggested that philosophy can provide a general perspective that is immediately related to the process of education itself. Although through most of O'Connor's book philosophy is assigned a negative role, there is the brief suggestion that it offers a realignment of experience; not knowledge, but understanding: a new point of view on what we already know.[14] Israel Scheffler expresses a somewhat similar opinion in the introduction to his book, *The Language of Education.* He suggests that, in the light of the present development of science, philosophers may attempt to sketch a general perspective in two ways:

> Either by building on accepted findings and common experiences in various domains in order to elaborate a picture of the whole world, or by analysing the basic ideas and assumptions recurring in a variety of special fields.[15]

Although the former may be theoretically possible, the sheer vastness and specialization of scientific knowledge raise extremely serious practical difficulties. For this reason, recent philosophers have taken the latter approach. As Scheffler observes, however, there is considerable variation in the range of the perspective sought even at this level.

To the extent that philosophy is seeking a general perspective on the varieties of knowledge and intelligent inquiry, it is addressing itself immediately to one of the most fundamental questions in the design of any program of general education: how the methods and findings of different disciplines may be ordered and related in a curriculum.

III

Before attempting to draw together the positive conclusions from this discussion, I think it is necessary to comment somewhat more explicitly, although briefly, on two aspects of the topic: the nature of applied philosophy, and the present state of educational research.

Applied Philosophy

There is a tendency to draw a sharp distinction between pure and applied philosophy. However, with the exception of mathematical or formal logic, it seems that all philosophical inquiry is applied. We may make distinctions of degree: for example, in terms of the generality of the field of application (as between, say, theory of knowledge and philosophy of science, or philosophy of action and ethics) or in terms of the kind of applied field (a discipline, a set of practical activities, some combination of the two) or in terms of the kind of empirical knowledge on which the philosophical method is employed (everyday observation and common experience, introspection, experimentally supported conclusions, scientific theories). One of the distinctive philosophical concerns in any applied field is with the logical features of the characteristic concepts used in or about that field: the logical conditions which must be met if terms are to be used in the way appropriate to the context, the logical connections between the concepts within this context, and between these concepts and those in other settings: as Ryle puts it, 'working out the parities and the disparities of reasoning between arguments hinging on the concepts of one conceptual apparatus and arguments hinging on those of another'.[16]

In order to perform this broadly logical task, the philosopher must use factual knowledge and his conclusions will inevitably affect what we take to be the state of affairs. Even in analysing the concepts of ordinary language, a philosopher at least has to appeal to what he supposes is known by himself and others simply as speakers of the language: the actual usage of a term. It has been suggested that even here there is need for more systematic empirical evidence of what in fact the usage is. Passmore makes the point, perhaps a little unkindly, in his discussion of Ryle's distinction between 'use' and 'usage'.

> Ryle's answer is that he does not need to study usage. The philosopher already knows 'the stock use', as a result of a number of salutary corrective processes 'in the nursery' and in the later stages of his education. But this is true only in the sense that the philosopher ordinarily knows how to use a word in its more common contexts, or how to give a rough indication of its meaning to a foreigner. That is very different from the really accurate knowledge of nuances needed for a serious discussion even of 'the stock use'; Ryle's nurse, to point my case, apparently did not know there was such a word as 'misusage' and his best friends had never told him that one really must be careful in using the word 'synonym'.[17]

Apart from helping to clear up disputed questions of usage, well-founded empirical knowledge is probably also needed for an adequate philosophical analysis of even the most common features of experience. Writers in philosophy of mind, for example, frequently argue from the way in which we learn certain kinds of words. Thus in Anthony Kenny's *Action, Emotion and Will*, the way children learn emotion words is crucial at one point to his philosophical purpose. Incidentally, although Kenny is much more sensitive to the findings of psychology than many others who deal with topics in philosophical psychology, his only reference on this occasion is to Wittgenstein's view.[18]

In all aspects of applied philosophy not only is there this interchange between the formal and the substantive, but there are circumstances in which it is appropriate for the philosopher to engage in arguments and propose conclusions of a substantive kind. Common usage is not an unquestionable criterion; sometimes it is quite inadequate or radically misleading and the philosopher needs to argue for its reform. The place of substantive argument in philosophical inquiry is particularly well illustrated in the field of ethics. Suppose we start with the suggestion that ethics be restricted to an account of the logic of moral language. Even in this task, it will be necessary for the philosopher to become acquainted with the main variations in morality and the use of moral language in both contemporary and historical perspectives. It is not enough for him simply to know what other ethical theorists and moralists have said. He will need to be informed by social science, history, literature, current affairs. At the same time, his conclusions about the logical features of the moral domain, unless they simply catalogue the variations, must determine, at least in a general way, the substance of what is acceptable as morality. But I think the moral philosopher should go further to examine moral problems and suggest solutions. When a group of people faces a serious moral choice, it is obvious that a great deal of expert knowledge is relevant to an adequate response. If a decision is to be reached, this knowledge must be co-ordinated at some point, and whoever does it will have to be familiar with and rely on the findings of experts in several fields. Among all the contributors, I believe the moral philosopher has a particularly crucial role in this task. What he does as his special competence, clarifying and refining the logical character of the distinctive moral concepts and arguments, is normative for all kinds of inquiry into morality and already requires him to know related work in several empirical fields as well as the writings of moralists and ethical theorists.

I suggest that the situation of philosophy in relation to education is analogous. In commenting on Dewey's method in *Democracy and Education*, O'Connor complains that he goes beyond the philosophical limits in discussing questions of psychology, sociology, and educational method and in examining the aims and nature of education in a way 'which does not fall obviously into any conventional academic province'.[19] O'Connor is obsessed with the importance of the formal-substantive distinction. I do not necessarily wish to defend Dewey's conclusions or the details of his method, but I believe that, like the ethical theorist addressing himself to a moral problem, he is integrating knowledge from a variety of disciplines, in an essentially philosophical way, in order to provide a general guiding theory for the conduct of education.

The Present State of Educational Research[20]

In the following comments, I shall simply highlight the characteristics that seem most related to an assessment of the role of philosophy in the development of educational theory.

(i) Probably the only examples of general theories in educational research are those of operant and classical conditioning; and these can be criticized for not providing an adequate account of the learning with which education is crucially concerned. For the most part, empirical investigation is devoted to establishing statistical generalizations about a limited range of social or personal factors, causes of behavioural change, and so on which are believed to be relevant to education. A large part of recent sociological work, for example, has been trying to identify social factors (e.g. class, race, religion, region, institutional setting) related to academic success. It has been found, for example, that the self-concept may, under certain conditions, have as much to do with academic achievement as social class. Many studies have been done on poverty and cultural deprivation, the quality of segregated education, the reasons for school withdrawal and failure at various levels. Sociologists often employ organization theory. They see schools as complex bureaucratic organizations to which they apply such sociological concepts as class, status, and power.

Although there have been many studies on detailed aspects of language (verbal learning, reading, listening, speech, communicating), they have not been carried on in the context of any comprehensive theory of language behaviour (operant and classical conditioning have been most influential in work on verbal learning) and they have not issued in any general theory to guide classroom teaching and learning in these areas. This, I think, is typical of all phases of empirical research in education at present. The experimental design is often very sophisticated; sometimes, however, this may be a substitute for thinking about the more fundamental issues: discovering the serious problems, devising worthwhile hypotheses, etc. In an attempt to achieve the ideal of a general theory, some researchers, encouraged by a number of philosophical comments on educational theory, have mistakenly attempted to employ a formal deductive scheme as a model for the stage of theory building. They confuse the reconstructed logic of certain built theories with the logic of procedure in building a theory.

(ii) As noted earlier, the problems studied are frequently detached from the total enterprise of education and perceived in the context of this or that particular social science. Empirical researchers, as well as philosophers of education, have been disturbed by this disregard for the educational question. Piaget's account of developmental stages, for example, is no doubt useful for an educator. Among other things, it indicates what we may typically expect in the present circumstances and illustrates vividly the importance of logical sequence. But it does not answer the educator's question about the kind of deliberate instructional intervention for which he should be responsible in the child's life at a certain age. Educational research may find out that a particular method will accelerate the acquisition of a later stage, or remove a stage altogether if it is judged to be undesirable (as may be the case with one or more of the typical stages of development in moral reasoning that Kohlberg has described). This still does not settle the educational question. Even if children can be taught algebra at age five, there are other practical issues and questions of value which affect the decision on what a child of five should be doing with his life.

The point which is crucial here has already been mentioned. A study of education as education must accept its main concepts (teaching and learning and the whole web of concepts that is formed around them) with the normative force they have in that complexly interrelated pattern of human activity which comprises the educative process. Like science, morality, and many other practices, what counts as education is not simply what is being done or has been done at any time in the name of education; it involves an ideal. 'Education' and its associated concepts are shaped by epistemological, moral, and aesthetic criteria. The neglect of the distinctive language of education in empirical research is evident at various levels. Practically all experiments in verbal learning have used groups of words (or nonsense syllables) without regard to the possibly significant influence of grammatical structure: a serious deficiency if one's interest is in the learning and use of language most related to education. More generally, psychologists have tended to neglect the study of the more complex intellectual activities (in science and the arts) that are central to deliberate education.

Among the more constructive approaches to educational research during the past few years have been the attempts to study teaching and learning together in the classroom and to develop theories that relate to both aspects. Specific work has been done on meaningful verbal learning with particular reference to the relationship between earlier and later sets of verbal learnings. Some approaches to classroom research have taken an interdisciplinary perspective, have been sensitive to the phenomena being studied in devising classificatory schemes, and have recognized the distinctive educational concepts.[21]

(iii) Much educational research, including the approach I have just mentioned, has been preoccupied with description and explanation. Such work is obviously valuable and may contribute either directly or indirectly to educational theory. For example, Talcott Parsons points out that the school viewed as a social system is performing two basic tasks in contemporary American society: developing commitments and skills for the performance of adult roles, and acting as a selective agency for the work force. This is useful information, but we still need to raise the crucial educational question of whether this is what schools ought to be doing. In other words, a large proportion of research has been neglecting the fundamental aspect of educational theory which, as we saw, is stressed by Hirst: an organized body of knowledge issuing in practical judgments to guide the conduct of education. I have already at least hinted that this task is more than anything else a philosophical one. Social scientific theories have become guiding doctrines for educational practice–but they undergo a philosophical conversion in the process. Sometimes this may not be self-conscious, as when group dynamics imperceptibly takes on the characteristics of a comprehensive theory of truth and value. On other occasions it is quite explicitly devised as philosophy. Of behaviourism, B.F. Skinner says that it is 'a philosophy of science concerned with the subject matter and methods of psychology'.[22] In fact, I think it has been fairly conclusively shown that it is a philosophy of man as well.[23] Skinner's theory shows, incidentally, that the integrating philosophical work need not necessarily be done by a member of the philosophical guild. What is important, I think, is that it be recognized for what it is. This applies equally to the small-scale philosophical work that needs to be done by scientists in the day-to-day conduct of their inquiries.

In stressing the philosophical dimension of prescriptive educational theory, I assume that questions about educational policy and the nature of the process should be examined within educational theory and not left simply to the decision of some external will (the government, the community, and so on) or to the chance consequences of the techniques we employ. Even if the scientists in the study of education claim that they only prescribe the most efficient means for reaching an externally determined end, the problem of co-ordinating the proliferated and fragmented research still remains.

I should stress that the position defended here (and what was said about the role of the moral philosopher) is not an appeal for 'philosopher kings'. In a democratic society, the political decisions affecting education are not made by educational theorists as such, any more than the political issues of war and peace are settled by experts in political science, economics, international law, ethics, and so on. The point I wish to make is that it does fall within the scope of education as a disciplined inquiry critically to examine the values that are actually shaping the educational process at any time and, where necessary, to argue for alternatives in the light of educational criteria. This is a quite different interpretation from the one which in its crudest form simply says, 'You (the group with effective political power in the situation) tell us what kind of end-product you want from the educational system, and we will devise the most effective means for getting it'.

IV

In the systematic study of education, I think it is useful to distinguish two aspects: the nature of the teaching-learning process, and the institutional forms of education in social context. These two aspects are intimately related. Whichever one is emphasized, the basic purpose of the study is to provide a body of knowledge and techniques for the effective guidance of educational practice. This includes the quest for more adequate explanation and understanding of the process in order both to suggest new knowledge for the improvement of practice and to strengthen the theoretical framework. It should be noticed that the theory as well as the procedures is important for those who have immediate responsibility for the process. If the teacher grasps the theory of what he is doing, not only does his own life and work become more intelligent but, because teaching cannot be reduced to a set of clear-cut rules, he is more likely to adapt effectively in novel situations.

The question now is how various disciplines, and philosophy in particular, are involved in the development of such educational theory. For the sake of simplicity, I will refer only to philosophy and psychology. Although there are important differences between psychology and economics, for example, in the kind of bearing each has on the study of education, what I am saying here may be taken as referring to all applied sciences in this field. We should distinguish, I think, three levels in the study of education.

The first of these involves the core of educational theory. Because of difficulties with the term 'theory', we should perhaps speak of it as educational theory and policy. In any case, it includes (a) the critical analysis of the distinctive concepts that are employed in the context of education, and (b) the systematic working out of practical judgments to guide educational practice. For the reasons already given, the first of these is clearly philosophical and the second, beyond quite specific issues, relies most heavily on philosophical skills to draw together the systematic empirical knowledge and practical experience of education into a relevant and justified normative educational theory. The position, as I have suggested, is comparable to that of the ethical theorist in the examination of moral issues.

The second level includes philosophy of education, psychology of education, etc. The areas are distinguished by the characteristic methods they use and the knowledge they apply. They constitute philosophy, psychology, etc. of education to the extent that they employ the concepts of education as clarified at the first level, and address themselves to problems that arise from and are framed within the conduct of education. If this is done, the prospects for interdisciplinary studies are enhanced and the raw material is already shaped for assimilation into the core of educational theory.

At the third level I am placing disciplines like philosophy, psychology, and so on that may inquire into aspects of education on their own terms, or deal with topics not about education but clearly relevant to it. We should distinguish here, however, between disciplines that, because of their affinity to what is involved in educating, may form effective branches of educational theory at the second level and those that treat education or apply to it from, as it were, the outside (e.g. architecture, demography, economics, law, statistics). In relation to this scheme, curriculum design and theory of instruction draw on each of the three levels, as well as on the disciplines and other modes of organized knowledge that form the content of the curriculum.

For philosophy of education (as part of the second level) I think the following aspects might make up the broad outlines of a program. They tend to have one or more of three focal points: the teaching-learning process, the school as an institution, the systematic study of education. In some cases, it is only philosophical method which is being applied to questions and problems distinctive of education; in other cases, there is also an application of more general philosophical distinctions and theories:

(i) logical features of the processes of teaching and learning, related to more general questions in the logic of critical inquiry;

(ii) general perspective on methods of inquiry and domains of knowledge. Philosophy of science, of mathematics, etc. as each bears on the methods of teaching and organizing the area of study within a curriculum;

(iii) moral and social philosophical questions about the general practice of education (as process and institution); its relationship to cultural transmission and change; values in the study of education; moral education;

(iv) aesthetics in relation to the general practice of education, and to curriculum and teaching methods in literature and the fine arts;

(v) aspects of the philosophy of mind and action that bear on philosophical work at the first level (the core of educational theory);

(vi) philosophical aspects of methodology in the historical and scientific study of education.

Among the contributions of general philosophy (the third level), it is obvious that philosophy of science, of mathematics, of history, etc. have special relevance for methods of teaching and organizing specific areas of study within a curriculum.

Although it is not logically required, I believe that there are good practical reasons why philosophers will make their most valuable contribution to educational theory both at the first and second levels if they work directly with teachers, curriculum experts, social scientists, and so on, on distinctively educational questions. As a consequence, I think it is a serious mistake to organize research in education on the basis of applied disciplines in isolation. No important research that issues in guidance for educational practice can be adequately treated within the methodology and findings of one applied discipline. Both in the concepts it employs and the questions of value it involves, there is an inescapable, if sometimes obscured, philosophical dimension.

I have been concerned throughout this discussion with the relevance of philosophy to educational theory and research and have only by implication referred to the place of philosophy in the teaching program of a school of education. If I am correct about the role it should play in developing the core of educational theory, then obviously there should be a substantial philosophical component in any serious graduate program in the study of education. In order to approach the examination of educational issues with any degree of methodological sophistication, students must be well grounded in at least one of the disciplines that make up the second level in our scheme. In practice, most students cannot hope to be adequately qualified in more than one such discipline. Hence higher degrees in education (at least research degrees) need to be undertaken from the perspective of one or another of the applied disciplines in the second level. The core of educational theory (level one) to which all these disciplines contribute should, however, form a part of the curriculum that is common to the specialized programs.

It is sometimes claimed that higher degrees in philosophy (history, etc.) of education should be undertaken in the department of the 'parent' discipline. When departments of philosophy (to take the case I am mainly concerned with here) offer courses on education and encourage theses on educational problems, this is obviously a desirable development and one that educational theorists should welcome. However, because of the complexity and importance of the practice of education, the intensive empirical study of which it is the object, and the many aspects under which philosophy is relevant, I believe that higher degree studies from the perspective of philosophy should be maintained and developed in schools of education. Such studies are distinguished from philosophy of education in the context of general philosophy, not only by being far more comprehensive and systematic in their treatment of education, but by their interdisciplinary character. The degree work presupposes a background in general philosophy and a continued study of the parent discipline; but it is a degree in education.

As I have already mentioned, each of the applied disciplines should contribute to a common ground of educational theory. Thus, in every case, the degree is in education but from the aspect of philosophy, or history, or psychology, etc. In this respect, a graduate program in education is comparable to that of any other interdisciplinary field of study focused on a significant human institution (e.g. the study of law, politics, language).

Notes and References

[1] F. McMurray, A preface to an autonomous discipline of education, *Educational Theory*, 1955, 5(3), 129–140; M. Belth, *Education as a Discipline*, Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1965.
A recent interesting attempt to defend an interpretation of education as an autonomous discipline is made by John Walton, *Introduction to Education: A Substantive Discipline*, Waltham, Mass.: Xerox College Publication, 1971. In summary, he claims that the task of the distinct discipline is to develop a refined conceptual scheme for understanding the complex phenomena of education. Its methods are to be borrowed (at least for the time being) from a wide range of other disciplines. While it combines normative and explanatory principles, it is concerned primarily with understanding education rather than with improving the practical art. What Walton describes hardly forms a distinct discipline in any strict sense. It is more like the unifying core of a multidisciplinary field of study: the set of concepts in which distinctively educational questions are formulated. He correctly points out that an effective multidisciplinary study of education cannot occur without such a set of concepts. Apart from the lack of unity, the study of education by various disciplines using concepts and theories devised entirely in relation to other phenomena can only issue in a limited, and perhaps distorted, understanding.

[2] P.H. Hirst, Philosophy and educational theory, In I. Scheffler (Ed.), *Philosophy and Education,* 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1966(a). See also P.H. Hirst, Educational theory, In J.W. Tibble (Ed.), *The Study of Education,* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966(b).

[3] Hirst (1966a), op.cit., p.91.

[4] I. Scheffler, Is education a discipline? In J. Walton and J.L. Kuethe (Eds), *Discipline of Education,* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963. Scheffler's main interest in this paper is to argue against the view that the study of education forms a distinct discipline. Somewhat like O'Connor (see below), he is preoccupied with the notions of 'theory' and 'discipline' in the sense that they provide explanatory principles. He does not refer to disciplined inquiry that is concerned mainly with interpretative or prescriptive theory. The development of prescriptive theory of education does not necessarily involve a distinct discipline in the strict sense, but I believe it is the level at which different kinds of theory from a variety of disciplines can be integrated in relation to the practice of education.

[5] Explanatory educational theories of any substantial scale inevitably reflect value judgments and at least to that extent contain a prescriptive element. The enterprise of education is heavily charged with values; one can scarcely describe even a simple episode of teaching and learning without making judgments that reflect moral and other values. This topic has been discussed at some length in the first chapter of this volume.

[6] See articles by Black, Ducasse, Frankena (and others) in *Harvard Educational Review,* 1956, **26**(2). (The issue is on the theme The aims and content of philosophy of education.)
D.J. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Philosophy of Education.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957.

[7] J. Passmore, Towards an analytic philosophy of education. *Melbourne Studies in Education,* 1965, p.68.

[8] D.J. O'Connor, The nature of educational theory. *Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain,* 1972, **6**(1), 97–109. Note reply by Hirst (1966a), op.cit., pp.110–118.

[9] J. Dewey, *Democracy and Education,* New York: Macmillan, 1916, p.386.

[10] Dewey, loc.cit.

[11] Dewey, op.cit., Ch.10.

[12] G. Ryle, *The Concept of Mind,* New York: Barnes & Noble, 1949, p.318.

[13] Dewey, op.cit., Ch.24.

[14] O'Connor (1957), pp.112–113.

[15] I. Scheffler, *The Language of Education.* Springfield, III: Charles C. Thomas, 1960, p.6.

[16] G. Ryle, *Dilemmas,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964, p.129.

[17] J. Passmore, Professor Ryle's use of 'use' and 'usage', *Philosophical Review,* 1954, **63**, p.62. Compare B. Mates, On the verification of statements about ordinary language, In V.C. Chappell (Ed.), *Ordinary Language,* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964, 64–74.

[18] A. Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will,* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964, p.66.

[19] O'Connor (1957), p.14.

[20] For a somewhat fuller discussion of issues raised here, see the final section of the previous chapter.

[21] For a useful description and assessment of recent studies of the classroom system, see I. Westbury, Research into classroom processes: A review of ten years' work, *Curriculum Studies*, 1978, **10**(4), 283-308. For an example of the kind of approach that reflects the multidisciplinary character of educational research and respects the distinctiveness of educational concepts and practice, see L. Stenhouse, *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development*, London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1975. (There is a critical comment on some of Stenhouse's views in Product or process in curriculum evaluation? in this volume.)

[22] B.F. Skinner, Behaviourism at fifty, In T.W. Wann (Ed.), *Behaviorism and Phenomenology*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964, p.79.

[23] See, for example, J. Copeland, Discussion: philosophy disguised as science, *Philosophy of Science*, 1964, **31**(2), 168-72; N. Malcolm, Behaviorism as a philosophy of psychology, In Wann, op.cit.

Part II: The Nature of Education

The serious discussion of any particular question of educational practice will inevitably reflect at least some elements of a normative theory—an account of what one believes education, ideally, is about. The two chapters in this section argue for a theory of this kind. It is one that interprets schooling as a systematic introduction to the main symbolic forms of culture for the sake of the range of critical understanding and appreciation which this makes possible in human life. It is, thus, a form of liberal education, and the first chapter argues specifically against various alternatives that interpret the school in a predominantly utilitarian way (e.g. for social adjustment, political reform, economic prosperity). The chapter sets out a number of general conditions that need to be satisfied if the practice of liberal education is to realize the promise of its intrinsic values.

In its emphasis on public modes of knowledge and standards of rational, objective inquiry, liberal education runs counter to the doctrines of romantic individualism. In the discussion of education, autonomy and creativity have been among the key concepts used by recent exponents of these and related doctrines. The main purpose of Chapter 4 is to argue that autonomy as self-assertion—the supremacy of the individual will in thought and action—cannot be an aim of liberal education, for the latter is primarily directed to the growth of rational understanding—thought and action subject to criteria of rationality and objectivity not determined by individual choice. Self-criticism in the light of these criteria is among its intended outcomes. The kind of personal freedom that liberal education offers is, first, the intellectual independence that comes through being able to apply these criteria with understanding and, second, the range and quality of significant choice that a knowledge of the main symbolic modes of culture makes possible.

Chapter 3

Characteristics of Quality in Education

The Instrumental View of Education and the School

It has been commonly assumed by conservatives and reformers alike that the school is and should be a crucial instrument for promoting their vision of society. In modern industrialized societies, of whatever ideology, the school has tended to be valued largely as an agency for training and selecting efficient personnel for the system, and for developing national political identity.

Among reformers, both liberals and egalitarians have until very recently taken the connection between school and socioeconomic opportunity for granted, and their concern with the school as an agent of social reform has focused almost exclusively on the promotion of equal economic opportunity.[1] For the liberals, it has been a matter of making sure that schooling, thought to be the major instrument of economic opportunity, would be equally accessible to all groups in the society. For the more egalitarian-minded, the objective has been to ensure, as nearly as possible, equality of scholastic outcome for all groups in the society–and this involves treating individuals and groups quite unequally during the process.

Given that schooling has so commonly been valued mainly as an instrument for achieving certain non-educational ends, it is not surprising that educational institutions would reflect a 'factory' or 'managerial' model of organization, or that the making of a human being might be thought to be analogous to the making of an automobile.

While some of the social reformers have been directly concerned about the form and content of schooling itself, the question of what schools do in the name of education and what real relationship there is between scholastic achievement and the performance of a job has largely been overshadowed by the belief that access to schooling is the key to improving an individual's or a group's chances in the competition for social and economic advantage. The attempt to use the school in this instrumental way has had at least two important consequences for the achievement of quality in education: the continual inflation of scholastic credentials, and the proliferation of all kinds of formal courses for acquiring skills and knowledge that were previously learnt on the job or in some other way.[2]

Recent writers who have focused directly on the nature of schooling display a very broad spectrum of interests. Many have been trying to work out what schools (or some alternative to them) might usefully do for the apparently large percentage of the population that has neither the ability nor the interest to engage in serious academic work. Another substantial group has been proposing various reinterpretations of schooling that place it more effectively at the service of a favoured political objective. In relation to the theme of quality, the effort to shape the practices of the school so that they both reflect and promote egalitarian principles is particularly significant. The emphasis on equality is not logically incompatible with a high level of quality in education. However, in the face of practical difficulties, the bias in the egalitarian position seems to tend in the direction of mediocrity.

Various Senses of 'Education'

While the question of what constitutes quality in education cannot ignore the uses to which education may in fact be put or be tailored to serve, I shall approach the question by attempting to treat education as far as possible on its own terms. What I mean is that, despite its humble ancillary origins, the practice of education, like such other practices as art and literature, has in the course of its history acquired a degree of autonomy. It may promote a variety of ends, but there is a limit to what may justifiably or even intelligibly be done in the name of education. It may be interpreted from a variety of perspectives, but a psychological or political theory of education, for example, is not necessarily an educational theory. In the discussion that follows, I shall be commenting directly on the characteristics that distinguish a high level of quality in the practice of education. Because education has become a notoriously vague and ambiguous concept, it will first be necessary to mark out explicitly the boundaries within which I am examining the criteria of quality in education.

There is the sense in which education refers to the total range of experiences by which human beings come to maturity in the context of a given society and culture. Even in this broad interpretation, while virtually anything may contribute to our education, not every experience is necessarily educational. The notion of maturity (or its equivalent) implies some standards by which change over time in the life of a human being is evaluated. People may differ on what these standards are, and thus on what counts as being educated.

Although much of education, understood broadly, may be incidental or even fortuitous, there has to be some deliberate effort on the part of adults in a society if its new members are to acquire distinctly human ways of thinking, feeling, imagining, communicating, acting, and so on: that is, the skills involved are not simply given as a matter of genetic endowment, nor do they emerge spontaneously in the course of growth. The deliberate effort to develop these skills constitutes a somewhat narrower sense of the term 'education'. The procedures by which young children learn to speak or to recognize that there are important differences in the way we should treat persons and things are obvious and crucial examples.

There are some distinctively human ways of thinking, feeling, etc.–or at least some aspects of them–that most people do not easily pick up informally, even with the encouragement of those who are already accomplished. Their acquisition depends on, or is greatly facilitated by, a sustained and systematic effort at learning under the guidance of others who by training and experience are specially qualified for the complex tasks of teaching that are involved. Obvious examples are learning to read with critical appreciation and to write with precision and style. Such teaching and learning form the practice of education in an even more specific use of the word. While this practice might be conducted in a variety of ways, it has in fact given rise to the distinct social institution called the school. In examining characteristics of quality in education, I am referring to this selective systematic induction into aspects of culture and social life associated with the institution of the school. Even in this restricted sense, the engagement in education is by no means limited to childhood and adolescence. However, in the present context, it is this age range that I mainly have in mind.

I must further stipulate that in this discussion I am referring to schooling only in so far as it is concerned with liberal education: that is, as it contributes to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes thought to be desirable for human beings as such, regardless of the specific roles that they

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may play in life. Historically schooling has been both liberal and vocational. Sometimes these have been combined, even closely integrated, in the school curriculum; on other occasions they have distinguished different kinds of schools. It is an interesting feature of the western cultural tradition that several of the influential ideals of an educated person (in the general sense) have grown out of vocational and professional ideals.[3]

In demarcating the concept of education by reference to schooling one does not gain any short cut to answers on what constitutes quality in education—although the problem may be a little more manageable. There is no help at all if schooling is simply identified as what schools in fact do, for, apart from what schools might claim to do in the name of educating, they can serve a wide range of other purposes. When schooling is associated with the concept of educating, and thus is used in a normative sense, we are confronted by two general and controversial questions: what activities are to count as educational, and what educational activities should the school engage in? In making the above distinctions in the meaning of 'education', I could not avoid taking some steps towards answering these questions.

There are at least three main objections to the position expressed or implied in the distinctions I have made on the meaning of 'education'. The first comes from people such as Illich[4] who argue that it is impossible (at least in the conditions of the contemporary world) for the institution of the school to avoid having an immorally manipulative, dehumanizing effect. According to Illich and those who share his analysis, the school, with its structured curriculum of studies under the direction of teachers, is fundamentally antithetical to the achievement of quality in education. The latter depends on dismantling the school system and relying entirely on such informal, incidental, and self-motivated kinds of learning as people participate in the life of society at large.

The second and third objections come from those who in different ways demand educational reform while retaining the institution of the school. Supporters of the second objection deplore the use of the school as an instrument of economic opportunity, yet seek educational change mainly for the ulterior end of political and economic reform. One version of the policy of the 'long march through institutions' claims that when the schools are given fully to educating, they develop people who are dysfunctional in a corporate capitalist economy, and so eventually bring about its downfall. More usually, this objection challenges the claim that there is any independent ground on which the nature of education and the role of the school may be determined. They are thoroughly politicized, and cannot be otherwise. The only question to be settled is the kind of political ends they serve.

The supporters of the third objection not only wish to retain the school but advocate the expansion of its role. Over the past few decades, there has been strong support from various theoretical perspectives for a continual proliferation of the functions of the school.[5] It has reached the point where the school is seen virtually as an all-purpose institution, a conglomerate of family, mental health clinic, community centre, social reform agency, and more. Some exponents of this view simply want to tack on all kinds of good works to the specifically educational activities of the school. Others go much further and reinterpret the educational role of the school as self-expression, mental health, social reform, and so on.

I shall comment on these objections only to the extent of making my earlier assumptions more explicit. One may agree with much of Illich's criticism of the actual effects of schooling and its exaggerated place in contemporary society without concluding that the only solution is to get rid of the school altogether. Like any other human institution, the school always stands in need of reform. As part of this process, it would be desirable to develop alternative opportunities for learning and to 'disestablish' the school (for example, to break down its present close connection with social and economic advancement). These changes would help to free the school from the distraction of educational activities that it does not need to perform, and from external pressures that may radically divert it from its distinctive educational role.

In reference to the second objection, there may be justification for believing that, if only the schools were to promote high-quality education, they would contribute substantially to a radical political and social transformation. A significant rise in the level of critical and imaginative thought among the population generally would, no doubt, facilitate various reforms in the present system. It might even lead to the collapse of corporate capitalism. However, apart from settling the matter by arbitrary definition, I do not see why the ideal of an educated person is necessarily incompatible with that of a capitalist economy. In any case, many of our basic social problems arise from the conditions of a mass technological society rather than from a particular economic or political system. The main point in the present context is that if the school, when fully committed to the task of educating, fails to precipitate the desired revolutionary change, there is every reason to suppose that the advocates of the 'long march through institutions' policy, even in its mildest form, would manipulate the school in whatever other way they thought it would be an effective instrument of revolution.

For the stronger versions of the policy, one is not left in doubt. It is explicitly argued that the school is necessarily a politicized institution and that what counts as education depends basically on the political ends it serves.[6] The attempt to politicize education (and the school) totally is, I believe, seriously mistaken and undesirable. The claim that education cannot be politically neutral does not entail the claim that every aspect of education must be political. Among other defects, this latter belief ignores the variety of human knowledge and experience; it forces those engaged in an educational inquiry to reduce all problems, however complex, to the simplified dimensions that make a decision of action possible; and it breaks down the degree of detachment of school from society that is a necessary condition for the development of critical thought. Except by a process of crude reduction, aesthetic standards and criteria of rationality and objectivity–which apply perhaps even more immediately to the practice of education than to moral and political ideals–cannot be treated as being in themselves political values.

The advocates of the school as an all-purpose institution are, I believe, taking a very short-sighted approach to social and educational reform. There seems to be an extreme and unwarranted confidence in the power of the school as an antidote to the breakdown of other social institutions or a decline in cultural vitality. Despite their exaggerations, the writings of Goodman and Illich provide a powerful critique of this fixation on schooling. The attempt to make the school all things to all men not only confounds any distinctive educational purposes that this institution may be in a unique position to perform, but it directs attention and effort away from those points in society at which reform could most effectively be made. Ironically the quality of what the school can do depends largely on the quality of the general culture and the broad range of key social institutions.[7]

On Valuing and What is Valuable

The characteristics of high quality in the practice of education are obviously to be determined by what is thought to constitute the value of education.[8] The latter is not simply a matter of what people, even the majority, in fact value in the name of education, or what kind of value they in fact place upon it. It is possible for high quality in education not to be highly valued, or for it to be valued only because it happens to be an effective means of securing something quite different, such as social or political power.

At the same time, there are significant connections between the psychological activities of valuing and the judgment that a thing is valuable. First, feelings of pleasure or, more vaguely, of satisfaction, are usually considered to be valuable without reference to anything else. However even here we cannot entirely ignore the cause or object of our feelings. For example, the pleasure that a person gets from inflicting pain on someone else does not deserve to be valued. Second, whatever is claimed to be objectively valuable must be related in some way to the capacities and experiences that distinguish human beings, including their characteristic needs and interests. The criteria of aesthetic value would be different if human beings could not perceive colour and sound as they do, and the moral domain would be substantially changed if they were immune to physical pain. Third, it would be bizarre to insist that something was valuable if there were no circumstances in which human beings ever experienced it as valuable. For to say that a thing is valuable is to imply that it satisfies certain standards of excellence such that the appropriate experience of it will be humanly perfecting.

In assessing the value of anything, including education, it is possible to treat it as either instrumentally valuable or valuable as an end. The same thing may be assessed from both perspectives. It is also obvious that, although people may differ on what they count as end values, they must hold one or several such values, in relation to which the things they treat as instruments of value are thought to be effective means.

Some theorists have argued that intrinsic value must be located in the 'satisfyingness' of an experience. In this interpretation, even the objects we ultimately prize are in the strict sense instruments of value. It is true that there are feelings of satisfaction that can be identified as such without any reference to their particular cause or object. A satisfying state of mental calm might, for example, be induced by listening to Beethoven's Sixth Symphony or by taking a dose of valium. For the purpose of the end value, one means might do as well as the other; they would then be equal in instrumental value. But there are many occasions on which an experience is recognized as worthwhile (and thus, in some sense satisfying) precisely because it is the experience of a certain object. Whether or not one feels mental calm from listening to Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, to attend to it for what it is as a work of art is a worthwhile experience because the work embodies characteristics of aesthetic excellence. We cannot achieve the quality of this experience by taking a drug or doing deep-breathing exercises instead of listening to the music, or even by substituting a different symphony. There is a sense, then, in which we may say that certain things are intrinsically valuable: that for a human being to experience them appropriately constitutes a desirable state of affairs. The experience is humanly perfecting because such objects exhibit various kinds of excellence relevant to the capacities and potentiality of human beings. One does not need any further justification for engaging in the experience of these objects, although they may also be instrumentally valuable in a great many ways.

The Quality of Education from the Perspective of Intrinsic Values

I wish now to relate these comments on the nature of value to the question of quality in education. Clearly this question can be answered by assessing the effectiveness with which the process of education serves various valued (and perhaps valuable) extrinsic ends. The limitation of this approach is that it does not necessarily provide a test of the educational quality of the process. A school may engage in activities that are trivial, or even miseducative, and still be entirely effective in producing patriotic and orderly citizens, or in promoting an egalitarian society, or enabling minority groups to gain proportionate representation in the various economic strata of the capitalist system. The crucial matter, therefore, is what we think are distinctively educational activities and how we value them.

Following from what I have said very generally about the nature of education, I think the fundamental condition of educational quality is that the process of teaching and learning should be preoccupied with the highest achievements in the various forms of meaning through which human life and the world are described, explained, interpreted, and evaluated, and through which human experience is expressed.[9] Some of the forms of meaning tend to be predominantly theorizing activities, although they may be applied in various practices. Mathematics, science, history, and philosophy are clear examples. Other forms of meaning are directly enmeshed in practical activities, such as religion, morality, education, government, literature, and the arts. Because of the significance of these practices in human life, they have given rise to related theorizing activities (for example, theology, ethics, literary criticism). Fundamental to and pervading all these forms of meaning is the institution of language. In terms of the comments already made on values, it is obvious that for a person to come to an understanding and appreciation of any of these forms of meaning must be an intrinsically worthwhile experience, whatever ulterior purposes it may serve. We cannot gain adequate mastery in any of the forms of meaning simply through schooling; but the achievement does depend on systematic and guided learning and thus justifies the existence of the school as a distinct institution.

In this interpretation, the process of teaching and learning is continuous with the outcome. The intrinsic values involved in thinking, feeling, imagining from, say, a scientific or literary perspective are already in some fashion being realized in the efforts by which one enters into such symbolic modes of culture. And the normative criteria by which one engages effectively in their distinctive activities (for example, testing the adequacy of the evidence for a factual claim, appreciating various levels of meaning in a novel) apply equally to the tasks of teaching and learning. In terms of general intrinsic value, the quality of education, whether as process or outcome, depends largely on how well it satisfies the standards of excellence that distinguish the epistemic[10], aesthetic, and moral domains.

General Criteria of Quality in the Curriculum of Liberal Education

I am assuming that the school can escape from its crudely instrumental role in the economy, and from the pressure to turn it into a multipurpose welfare agency. But even when the school concentrates its energies on the deliberate initiation of each new generation into the complex patterns of meaning that characterize distinctively human aspects of life, it is obvious that quality in education is not automatically assured. The quality of teaching and learning and of the educational outcome can be influenced by a vast number of factors. I shall concentrate on several aspects of the curriculum itself. Although initiation into the public modes of understanding is what I believe education should basically be about at every age, in these comments I refer mainly to the period that corresponds to the secondary school. There is no one pattern of curriculum organization that has an exclusive claim on logical, psychological, and other grounds. However I do wish to draw attention to some of the emphases that I believe crucially shape the quality of an introductory program of liberal education.[11]

(i) Implicit in what has already been said is the claim that quality in education depends on breadth in the kinds of knowledge and skill that make up the curriculum. The underlying argument for this view includes two aspects: first, that in the course of human culture there have developed several modes of thought or understanding that differ in significant respects; and second, that the range and quality of a person's experience (what he perceives, feels, imagines, wants, does) depends on the perspectives of thought or understanding he has acquired through learning. It is not necessary to argue here about precisely how many forms of meaning there are and on what bases they are distinguished. As a criterion for quality in education, the curriculum should at least provide for a substantial range of study in each of the three domains of value mentioned earlier: the epistemic, the aesthetic, and the moral.

Despite the fact that during its long history liberal education has sometimes been conducted rather narrowly, breadth in the content and style of learning experience should be one of its distinguishing features. For if we interpret it as liberal in the sense that it helps to set human beings free from prejudice, ignorance, blind feeling, dull imagination, and irrational action and enables them to be responsible for their own choices through understanding the relevant criteria of criticism and evaluation, then it must include the broad range of meanings within which reasoned human life is enacted.

At the same time, as A.N. Whitehead argued many years ago, the full quality of education cannot be realized unless one specializes in some respect. The aesthetic sense of style–the economy of effort in the attainment of an end–is, in Whitehead's words, 'the last acquirement of the educated mind' and 'is always the product of specialist study, the peculiar contribution of specialism to culture'.[12]

(ii) The forms of knowledge (or meaning) should be approached, not primarily for their use either directly in the production of more knowledge or indirectly in some other activity to which the knowledge is applied, but for their contribution to human understanding, appreciation, and interpretation. In this respect, the study of, say, history as part of a liberal education would differ from its study in the professional training of an historian.

Learning with understanding is among the most crucial tests of quality in education. Given that schooling should primarily be an induction into the patterns of meaning that distinguish human culture, it is obvious that managerial or mechanical models of its role are quite inadequate, for patterns of meaning are not acquired as such unless they are understood. If the objective were simply to produce ways of behaving that exhibited conformity to certain laws, mere conditioning or brain-washing would be satisfactory. But the educational objective is to enable human beings not to behave in ways that fit the scientific description of laws, but to act in the light of rules and standards that they apply with understanding and discrimination.

A detailed account of what understanding involves would require a close examination of each of the main forms of meaning. There are different kinds and levels of understanding that vary with the learner and with what is being learnt, and the process is usually a slow and gradual one. In general, learning with understanding consists in coming to know what evidence is relevant for different kinds of belief and why a belief may or may not be reasonably held; why the methods used for examining a particular type of problem are appropriate; how the elements of a system are related (whether it is a painting, an arithmetical series, a body of knowledge, a social group). Other general aspects of learning with understanding are included in the points that follow.[13]

(iii) Within each form of knowledge, attention should be focused on basic concepts, principles, and procedures: on grasping its main distinguishing features. It is equally important, however, for the program to stress constantly the patterns of relationship among the various forms of knowledge. The curriculum should be deliberately designed to help the learner notice the connections and differences. Another crucial test of quality in education is, thus, the extent to which this integration is being achieved. But the achievement of integration goes beyond learning what the relative power and limitations of the different forms of knowledge are, and how they are related. There is a further dimension to the ideal, namely, that the learner should acquire the complex patterns of meaning in such a way that they effectively structure the full range of his experience. In terms of the domains of intrinsic value mentioned earlier, the objective of integration involves not only the epistemic but also the aesthetic and moral.

While I take the view that the school should be predominantly concerned with the range of mental activities involved in significant human practices, the ideal of integration requires that these activities should not be artificially abstracted from their context or narrowly interpreted. One reaction to the rationalistic fragmented subject curriculum has stressed doing and making, with the danger that schooling is turned into mindless activity. Another reaction, recently in vogue, finds the secret of true education in affective experience.

Preoccupation with the affective merely perpetuates the schizophrenia between thought and feeling. It is a prevalent disease of our society that leaves people very susceptible to the influence of propaganda and indoctrination. The curriculum should be so designed and implemented as to reinforce the complex interplay among thinking, feeling, and doing. We should hope that students would learn to do mathematics and science 'feelingly', just as they would learn to play games and enjoy music 'understandingly'.

(iv) The initiating should not be envisaged as an introduction to abstract timeless procedures and pieces of information. It is an entering into public communal ways of acting that express human purposes and reflect the history of immense human effort. Michael Oakeshott puts the matter this way:

> As civilized human beings, we are the inheritors neither of an enquiry about ourselves and the world, nor of an accumulating body of information, but of a conversation begun in the primeval forests and extended and made more articulate in the course of centuries. It is a conversation which goes on both in public and within each of ourselves.[14]

I am interpreting liberal education as a systematic introduction to this conversation.

It will be obvious why, in this view, the teacher plays an indispensable role.[15] The most important educational learnings, such as the acquisition of judgment, come through a sustained apprenticeship with someone who is already a master. It is in this sense that a personal relationship of teacher and learner is essential for the quality of education.

(v) As students are being initiated into the various forms of knowledge, they should also gain some elementary grasp of the 'second order' questions. This means, for example, not simply knowing about what happened in the past but also knowing something of how our knowledge of the past is formed.

There should also be reflection upon the structure of the curriculum as a whole. I stress again that there is no unique arrangement of the forms of meaning demanded either by logic or psychology. Within the constraints set by these considerations, and by other factors such as the economy and the number of teachers available, many imaginative patterns of organization are possible. Presumably there will be justification for whatever structure is adopted. Students should gain some grasp of its rationale and become aware of other possibilities.

A Common Curriculum

In the foregoing discussion, I have assumed that the broad features of the curriculum should be the same for everyone. That is, I have discounted differences of sex, race, social class, and even intelligence as being irrelevant to settling what the basic characteristics of quality in education should be—although they may constitute significant practical conditions that affect the attainment of this quality. To be adequately developed as a human being, one needs to be in possession of the distinct conceptual perspective of each of the basic forms of thought. To be ignorant of any one of them is to be incapable of a certain range of significant human activities. Granted that human beings should be treated equally in whatever vitally concerns them simply as human beings, it follows that no one should be denied the opportunity of acquiring the broad range of conceptual perspectives. Moreover, in democratic theory, every adult member of society is assumed to be capable of exercising responsible freedom and of participating in the formation of public policy. If we are to have any chance of satisfying these assumptions, it is necessary that as many citizens as possible should possess such a range of conceptual perspectives in order adequately to interpret complex public issues.

Instead of having different curricula for different groups in the society, it seems clearly preferable to allow for levels of difficulty in the common curriculum and to let each student proceed at his own pace.[16] Within each of the basic forms of knowledge there are many alternatives, and many different ways in which the component elements can be arranged. The main danger is that we will too easily give up the effort of helping slow learners to be educated in the fullest sense, and sell them short on an easy substitute.

Notes and References

[1] Among challenges to the school as an agent of equal opportunity, see C. Jencks et al., *Inequality: A Re-assessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America*, New York: Basic Books, 1972; F. Mosteller and D.P. Moynihan, (Eds), *On Equality of Opportunity*, New York: Random House, 1972.

[2] In addition to references in the previous note, see also I. Berg, *Education and Jobs: The Great Training Robbery,* New York: Praeger, 1970; C. Greer, *The Great School Legend,* New York: Basic Books, 1972. The tendencies I have referred to were becoming manifest in the USA as early as the 1930s. They have been the subject of attack by a long line of critics, such as Flexner, Hutchins, Barzun, Bestor, and Lawrence Stone.

[3] This point is developed by W.J. Bouwsma, Models of the educated man, *American Scholar,* 1975, 44(2), 195–212.

[4] I. Illich, *De-Schooling Society,* London: Calder & Boyars, 1971; E. Reimer, *School is Dead,* Harmondsworth, Mx: Penguin, 1971.

[5] At the level of theory, the trend can be traced to John Dewey's argument in *The School and Society* (1899).

[6] For a recent popular exposition of this view, see P. Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* New York: Herder & Herder, 1970.

[7] As T.S. Eliot remarks:

> The schools can transmit only a part [of culture], and they can only transmit this part effectively, if the outside influences, not only of family and environment but of work and play, of newsprint and spectacles and entertainment and sport, are in harmony with them.

Notes towards the definition of culture, In *Christianity and Culture,* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, n.d., p.183.

[8] I have developed this section at greater length in B. Crittenden, *Education and Social Ideals,* Toronto: Longman Canada, 1973, Ch.1.

[9] I prefer to speak of 'forms of meaning' rather than 'forms of knowledge', because 'knowledge' is often used in a narrow sense (of statements that are either tautologous or in a given context accurately describe a state of affairs). The expression 'forms of meaning' (or knowledge) is intended to suggest both that there are different kinds of knowledge and that knowledge of the one kind may be apprehended in various ways.

[10] I use this term for the range of values that includes the truth, objectivity, validity, rationality of beliefs, and modes of inquiry.

[11] I hope it will be clear from what follows that I am not supporting the traditional subject-centred curriculum, in which students were preoccupied with memorizing unrelated heaps of information.

[12] A.N. Whitehead, *The Aims of Education and Other Essays,* New York: Mentor Books, 1949, pp.24, 25. The importance of the balance between breadth and concentration for the quality of education may be expressed in Ernst Curtius' adaptation of Kant: 'Specialisation without universalism is blind. Universalism without specialisation is inane'. *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages.* New York: Harper & Row, 1963, p.ix.

[13] A crucial aspect of learning with understanding is that one learns how to learn and how to think for oneself.

[14] M. Oakeshott, *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays,* London: Methuen, 1962, p.199.

[15] Again, as Oakeshott has put it:

> A teacher is one in whom some part or aspect or passage of this inheritance (of human understandings and imaginings) is alive. He has something of

which he is a master to impart (an ignorant teacher is a contradiction) and he has deliberated its worth and the manner in which he is to impart it to a learner whom he knows. He is himself the custodian of that 'practice' in which an inheritance of human understanding survives and is perpetually renewed in being imparted to newcomers.

Education: The engagement and its frustration, In R.F. Dearden, P.H. Hirst, and R.S. Peters (Eds), *Education and the Development of Reason*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, p.25.

[16] For one account of how this may be done, see H.S. Broudy, B.O. Smith, and J.R. Burnett, *Democracy and Excellence in American Secondary Education*, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964. For further comments on a common curriculum see Chapter 10, Equality and Education, in this volume.

Chapter 4

Autonomy as an Aim of Education

Introduction

Individual autonomy is widely regarded as a fundamental value in educational theory and practice. Supporters of a systematic approach to knowledge in teaching and learning often claim that one of the main outcomes, if not the most important, of the educational process is its contribution to the making of an autonomous person. In the tradition of liberal education, the forms of human thought and knowledge are to be studied for their own sake, for the distinctive values they can bring to a person's life, and not simply for the sake of an extrinsic end they may happen to serve. It is not surprising that the qualities of mind promoted through such disinterested studies should be described in terms of personal freedom and autonomy. Among the so-called radicals in education, autonomy is not simply an achievement to be promoted, but a condition to be respected even in children and thus a basic criterion of the kind of educational procedures that may legitimately be employed. Whatever other defence may be offered for such practices as the open classroom, participatory democracy in decisions of schooling, self-directed and individualized learning, the stress on creativity and learning by discovery, they are often thought to be justified in the name of autonomy.

That such otherwise divergent theorists can so happily appeal to autonomy suggests that the notion and its relationship to education deserve to be examined more closely. In the following discussion, I shall attempt to pursue some aspects of this task. I shall be concerned, for the most part, with the practice of education in so far as it involves a systematic introduction to the main symbolic forms of culture. In this practice, the enterprise of teaching and learning is not determined primarily by the immediate interests of the child or the society, but by the most significant human achievements of knowing, interpreting, evaluating, expressing—what we classify loosely as the sciences, the humanities, and the arts. I take it that this view of teaching and learning clearly belongs within the tradition of liberal education. For the sake of brevity, I shall therefore refer to it by this title. There are other variations on the theme of liberal education. In the interpretation I have briefly sketched, the development of reasoned thought and judgment is not restricted to exclusively intellectual activities but extends to the moral and aesthetic domains as well.

I am stressing liberal education in the present context for two reasons. In the first place, the developed modes of inquiry and expression in our culture cannot be acquired effectively in an incidental way. To come to an adequate understanding of their main features and of their relationship to one another depends on a sustained and carefully planned effort of teaching and learning. Thus, whatever may be the case for other kinds of education, the practice of liberal education as I am interpreting it clearly provides a justification for the school as a distinct institution. I take it as obvious that to be liberally educated is among the high-order goods of human life, and that the opportunity of attaining it to an adequate extent should be available to everyone. However I leave open the question of whether everyone ought to be liberally educated.

My second reason for focusing on liberal education is that its relationship to personal autonomy seems to be a complex and ambivalent one. If we believe that children are already autonomous (in a sense that demands moral respect) and that their exercise of autonomy determines what counts as education, it is obvious that the question of the relationship between education and autonomy has been drastically simplified. In this scheme, education is to be defined as any activity that expresses a person's autonomous choice and, presumably, increases his capacity and opportunity for such choices. On the other hand, if we believe quite strictly in the primacy of the socializing role of education, it seems that personal autonomy can hardly be a serious candidate as an aim of education. In the case of liberal education, the process is not determined as a function of autonomy, but by the public symbolic structures that make up a culture. At the same time, proponents of liberal education would claim that personal autonomy of any significance is achieved only through initiation into these symbolic structures. While this process of initiation, unlike socialization, is not crudely at odds with autonomy, there seems to be something paradoxical about the claim that we achieve personal autonomy through being encultured in such ways. In order to examine this and related issues, it will first be necessary to discuss a number of conceptual questions about autonomy.

Freedom and Authenticity

There is a fairly clear and strict sense of autonomy in which it is applied to a sovereign state. We may say that the members of such a state, particularly when government is conducted democratically, determine for themselves the rules under which they live as a political community. However, in this situation, autonomy cannot be ascribed to individuals, but only to the group as a whole. The same may be said of associations within a society that enjoy autonomy in the regulation of a certain range of activities. Even when decision making is widely shared, there cannot be rules binding a society unless individuals are to some extent subject to the will of others. There has been strong resistance in modern social thought to the acceptance of this view. Rousseau, Kant, and others have tried to devise plausible theories of how each individual can literally be autonomous in relation to the laws by which he lives as a member of a society. I shall refer to some aspects of Kant's theory later. In the meantime, I assume that, whatever defensible interpretation of personal autonomy may be given, the term 'autonomy' is being metaphorically extended from the context in which it refers to the self-governing activities of a sovereign state. The point of the metaphor is to highlight the claim that in certain respects individuals can and should make decisions for themselves and govern the course of their own lives. 'Self-direction' and 'independence' are among the terms that are more or less interchangeable with personal autonomy. It should be noted incidentally that even collective political autonomy is itself limited in principle as well as in fact. For example, a state is not morally free to determine for itself the moral principles according to which a minority group among its members should be treated.

In order to see more clearly the ingredients of personal autonomy, I shall first place it in the context of the general notion of freedom. The ideal of freedom may be stated both negatively and positively in relation to the external conditions that affect a human agent. Negatively it is the absence of hindrance or constraint in what we can otherwise do or refrain from doing, assuming that we are not hindering or constraining others. Positively it consists in the presence of external conditions that enable us to do or attain a certain range of things, such as the objects to which we are said to have a human right. The absence of interference and the presence of facilitating circumstances will often be among the necessary conditions for the exercise of autonomy, and it would be difficult in practice to become an autonomous person without adequate opportunity to act autonomously. But autonomy itself, in whatever specific way it may exist and be justified, refers directly to characteristics of the agent. An individual's freedom to decide for himself at a given time may be impeded or frustrated by the action of others or by the circumstances of his life. But it is also possible that he is unable to exercise this freedom even in the absence of external obstruction because of deficiencies in his own development as a human agent. For example, he may be poorly equipped in the skills of practical judgment; or he may lack the habits of perseverance and discipline needed to translate his decisions into practice; or his beliefs, needs, desires, goals, and the like may be in such a chaotic state that he is incapable of any sustained and consistent self-direction.

Theories of autonomy generally attempt to depict the intrinsic features of a human being that are thought to be essential for self-determination. In Isaiah Berlin's terminology, they provide interpretations of positive liberty. However, as Berlin's own selective discussion illustrates, a doctrine of positive liberty is not necessarily one of personal autonomy. A person who submits his empirical self to the ideal self of a nation, or who loses his own will in the will of God, may perhaps be said to have achieved, in some special sense, an exalted level of freedom; but it is difficult to see how this state of affairs can intelligibly be described as personal autonomy.

The condition of anomie in one's needs and desires is incompatible with autonomy. This incompatibility is reflected in the etymology of the words. Anomie consists in the absence of any regulating principles, while autonomy, however it is interpreted, obviously does not call into question the desirability of rules, direction, order, in a person's life. Anomie also involves, at least in its more severe forms, the destruction of an integral enduring centre of self-consciousness. Again, it is obvious that, if a person is to direct his own life, there must be such a centre of self-consciousness.

This last requirement is often discussed in terms of authenticity, which is thought to be an essential element in autonomy. In Arnold Kaufman's interpretation, authenticity depends on the possession of a core self; that is, a 'constellation of relatively deep-rooted important dispositions'.[1] Joel Feinberg speaks of the 'inner-core self' that includes 'the convictions, ideals, and purposes that are most deeply entrenched in a hierarchical network of similar principles'.[2] In both cases, whether a person acts authentically or not depends on whether his acting is consistent with his characteristic dispositions, convictions, and so on. It should be noted that to describe a person as authentic is not to pass a judgment on the quality of the core self. Villains as well as saints may act authentically. In this interpretation, it seems clear that a person who is autonomous, in the general sense in which I have so far used the term, must also be authentic. However, a person may display a high degree of authenticity without being autonomous. For example, the members of each of the three types described by David Riesman–the tradition-directed, the inner-directed, and the other-directed–act in an authentic way. Yet what distinguishes each type, including the inner-directed, is a particular kind of conforming behaviour.[3]

R.S. Peters proposes a narrower interpretation of authenticity in which it is more closely related to autonomy. Authenticity, in his account, depends on the sort of reasons for which a person decides to act. Peters puts it rather obscurely in this way:

> There must be some feature of a course of conduct, which the individual regards as important, which constitutes a non-artificial reason for pursuing it as distinct from extrinsic reasons provided by praise and blame, reward and punishment, and so on, which are artificially created by the demands of others.[4]

What Peters has in mind is perhaps illustrated negatively in situations where a person decides, on the basis of moral principles, that he should act in a certain way, but fails to do so because he fears punishment or disapproval. This is also what authenticity in the first interpretation is about; but it seems that Peters wants to go somewhat further. On this criterion, the other-directed people of Riesman's typology would necessarily lack authenticity. Oddly enough, from the point of view of autonomy, the criterion may not go far enough. It depends in part on just what is meant by a 'non-artificial reason'. It also depends on how and why a person accepts the reasons on which he makes decisions.

Presumably an inner-directed person has 'non-artificial' reasons for his actions; but in subtle ways he also may be thoroughly adjusted to the expectations of others.

In the discussion so far, I have been assuming that human beings are choice makers. This assumption does not deny that human actions, under various descriptions, may be explained in causal terms—although the mechanistic model is inappropriate if we take account of the differences between behaviour and movement. Nor does it ignore the limitations that are placed on the possibilities for choice by the subtle interaction of hereditary and environmental conditions that shape an individual's development as a human being. While these constraints are significant and give the lie to the romantic vision of personal autonomy, they should not be exaggerated. We do not have to secure a place for freedom by resorting to the verbal sleight-of-hand of a Hegel or an Engels: to say that freedom consists in the recognition of necessity. Within the limits that shape our choices, we do have a varying range of important options open to us, occasions on which we are not subject to compulsion. When people make decisions in such cases it is what we mean by saying that they choose freely and are responsible for the choice they make. I agree with Hampshire's claim:

> No conceivable advances in scientific knowledge can lead to the conclusion that I am not often—for example, at this moment—confronted with a plurality of things that I can do if I want to, between which I must choose; that there is this plurality of open possibilities I know by experience, as surely as I know anything, including the laws of physics and psychology.[5]

This view of freedom of choice relates to the question of autonomy in two important respects. First, in whatever way autonomy is interpreted as a human ideal, it can only be relative. Second, although any obstacle to free choice is also an obstacle to autonomy, the exercise of free choice does not entail that a person is acting autonomously. People can choose to place themselves under someone else's direction, or to act in a certain way in order to conform to the prevailing fashion. If we choose to obey a leader or an expert only after reflection, this is obviously preferable in its quality as a human act to simply following in a thoughtless, routine way. It may be entirely reasonable to submit to the judgment and directions of another person; but in doing so, whether we justify it to ourselves or not, we are thereby forfeiting some aspect of personal autonomy.

Personal Autonomy as an Ideal Type

In order to give a more positive sketch of autonomy as an 'ideal' type, I think it is useful, if not necessary, to distinguish three overlapping basic aspects. These may loosely be called the intellectual, the moral, and the emotional. One may be autonomous in any of these aspects without necessarily being autonomous in the others. Under the intellectual I include the whole range of one's beliefs, whether they are about the nature of the world or the things that are thought to be worthwhile or the standards of conduct. At an extreme limit, intellectual autonomy would require, in the first place, that a person would not accept any of his important beliefs primarily on the authority of others, but on his own experience, his own reflection on evidence and argument, his own sense of what is true and right. For complete intellectual autonomy, it would also seem necessary that a person should determine for himself the second-order questions about what constitutes a true claim, adequate evidence, a justifiable moral principle, and the like. Even the crucial concepts in which he perceives and understands should be of his own design or, at least, accepted from others only because he is personally convinced that such concepts are satisfactory.

Moral autonomy, as I am using the expression, is intended to embrace all forms of practical judgment and action. Assuming that factual and normative beliefs are relevant to the decisions we make on how we should act, it is clear that moral autonomy depends in part on intellectual autonomy. In the existentialist view, at least as Sartre has presented it, moral decisions in the concrete situations of life are pure acts of the will, choices in which belief and principle can play no part. If moral autonomy is understood quite literally, it will either include aspects of the extreme form of intellectual autonomy or appeal to an interpretation of moral choice in which such choice is the determining act of an isolated personal will that is the core of the self. As Iris Murdoch has shown[6], this interpretation finds support in contemporary Anglo-Saxon philosophy as well as in existentialism.

In addition to independence of thought in determining and applying criteria of moral judgment, moral autonomy includes the executive capacities for carrying into practice what one decides should be done. The possession of these capacities is commonly described by such terms as tenacity, resoluteness, strength of will, self-mastery. Perhaps the last of these most appropriately designates this facet of personal autonomy.

In relation to the exercise of political and other authority, a morally autonomous person will not, in the extreme view, obey or even acknowledge a command. 'For the autonomous man', says R.P. Wolff, 'there is no such thing, strictly speaking, as a command.'[7] If such a person acts as commanded, it is only because he is personally convinced about the merit of the action independently of the exercise of authority.

The third main aspect of autonomy, the emotional, is also to be interpreted fairly broadly. It may be treated as part of self-mastery in so far as the latter refers to the control of one's emotions, desires, and feelings. However the point is not simply that a person would exercise self-mastery in the face of strong emotional involvement, but that he would remain emotionally detached in his relationships to other persons and things. This form of independence and self-sufficiency has a long history as an ideal. It was illustrated in the life of Socrates and cultivated as a central doctrine by the Cynics and the Stoics.

Given the aspects of autonomy that I have been describing, it should be emphasized that even though a person may reflectively accept the authority of others in determining certain of his beliefs or actions, it is nevertheless an abdication of his autonomy. This possibility illustrates the insufficiency of R.F. Dearden's criterion of autonomy, namely that the explanation of what a person thinks and does in important matters requires 'reference to his own activity of mind'.[8] Obedience, even of a servile kind, is a human act and thus cannot be explained without reference to the agent's own activity of mind. Dearden's criterion may provide a sufficient condition for ascribing responsibility. But a person may be held responsible for what he does, without necessarily having acted autonomously.

Intellectual Autonomy and Subjective Epistemology

Of the three aspects of personal autonomy that I have just outlined, I shall give most attention to the intellectual as a possible aim of education. This aspect includes a significant part of what is often claimed on behalf of moral autonomy.

At the present time, there are probably very few serious defenders of the complete subjectivism that intellectual autonomy in the strict sense entails. However, in a variety of recent relativist interpretations of knowledge, the conditions of subjectivism on which a thoroughgoing intellectual autonomy depends are substantially satisfied. The trend is clearly illustrated in Feyerabend's 'anarchistic epistemology': he even draws a connection between his epistemological theory and the ideal of human freedom.[9] A similar interpretation is defended by Kuhn in his analysis of the changing models of epistemic procedure to which scientists adhere.[10] Basically the same kind of relativism is also inherent in Wittgenstein's notions of a form of life and a system. What is being claimed in theories of this sort is that questions of objectivity, rationality, and truth can only be raised in the context of a particular conceptual system. Different conceptual systems (whether, for example, the differences exist between cultures, or social classes, or interpretations of science, or science and religion) cannot be compared on criteria of objectivity, rationality, and truth; they are strictly incommensurable. One's adherence to a particular conceptual system is treated either as an essentially arbitrary and non-rational decision to commit oneself or as the effect of a combination of psychological and social causal conditions. At least for those who make the issues of knowledge depend ultimately on a non-rational subjective commitment, a place for personal autonomy of a very significant kind in man's intellectual life is obviously secured.

A somewhat similar view of intellectual autonomy based on the relative nature of knowledge has recently been gaining favour in educational theory and practice. It is difficult to say whether, or to what extent, the philosophical views just mentioned have had any direct influence. For the most part, the educationists have not developed the anarchistic epistemology that underlies their position. Kuhn's name is often quoted, but this may simply reflect a current fashion rather than a studied acceptance of his theory. In any case, the relativism of the educationists may have been fuelled more by some recent popular social theorists than by the philosophers. Certainly the vision of small local groups determining their own curriculum of learning and making their own knowledge can be nourished from the writings of a Theodore Roszak or a Peter Berger (although the latter eschews any epistemological stand).[11]

The trend in educational thought and practice to which I am referring incorporates much of what has now become the established doctrine of progressive education—in particular, the belief that each child's education should be determined primarily by his or her felt needs and interests. What has been added (or reiterated more forcefully, if we recall the instrumentalist branch of earlier progressive education) are some elements of a theory of knowledge in which the claim to objectivity for any form of thought and inquiry is radically challenged. The favoured alternative is either a version of subjectivism or, for those who find its individualist aspect repugnant, a relativism of small local groups made up of freely and fully participating members.

The flavour of this theory as it is proposed by educationists can be gained from the efforts of Charles H. Rathbone and Roland S. Barth to set out the interpretation of knowledge that they themselves support and that they believe is commonly assumed in the practices of open education.[12] Among their tenets are the following:

> Knowledge is idiosyncratically formed, individually conceived, fundamentally individualistic. Theoretically, no two people's knowledge can be the same, unless their experience is identical.
>
> Because knowledge is basically idiosyncratic, it is most difficult to judge whether one person's knowledge is 'better' than another's.
>
> Knowledge does not exist outside of individual knowers: it is not a thing apart. The data that go into books and into the Library of Congress are not the same as the knowledge people know.
>
> Knowledge is not inherently ordered or structured nor does it automatically subdivide into academic 'disciplines'. These categories are man-made, not natural.[13]

In relation to these views on the nature of knowledge, it is useful to notice what Rathbone takes to be the underlying assumption or 'the basic idea' among supporters of the open classroom on how children learn.

> Open education views the child . . . as a self-activated maker of meaning . . . Learning is seen as the result of his own self-initiated interaction with the world: the child's understanding grows during a constant interplay between something outside himself–the general environment, a pendulum, a person–and something inside himself–his concept-forming mechanism, his mind . . . in a very fundamental way each child is his own agent–a self-reliant, independent, self-actualizing individual who is capable, on his own, of forming concepts and of learning.[14]

Rathbone also reaffirms the Rousseauist faith of progressive education generally in the natural goodness of the child. This attribute of the child together with his autonomy as a learner form the basis of his general autonomy as a moral agent. Each child 'has the right to elect what he will do and what he shall be'; 'to pursue whatever question interests him'; 'what he does and who he becomes are his to decide'. In the theory of open education, as Rathbone interprets it, each child is thus already an autonomous agent, and this is a fundamental condition that any effort claiming the name of education should respect.

Given these beliefs about the nature of knowledge and the autonomy of the child as learner and moral agent, it is not surprising that the ideal teacher-student relationship bears no resemblance to that of master and apprentice. The key words in Rathbone's description of the teacher's role are 'assistant' and 'facilitator'.[15]

It is beyond the scope of this essay to provide an adequate critique of the varieties of relativist epistemology that underlie the assertion of an unqualified intellectual autonomy for the learner in the process of education. In relation to both the philosophical and the educational positions that have been mentioned, I shall merely point to what I take to be their most serious shortcomings. No doubt many of their supporters are reacting to the excesses of the mechanistic positivist account of knowledge–in particular, to its notion of objectivity[16]; and many are probably motivated by a proper moral revulsion at the inhumane uses to which knowledge, especially science, is frequently put. However, in attacking these philosophical and moral defects, it is not necessary to promote the role of the individual human agent in knowing to such an extent that any notion whatever of objectivity is undermined. In fact, once this has been done, the philosophical and moral criticism simply collapses into an expression of one ultimately non-rational commitment against another. The critical notes I here wish to make on recent forms of relativism have for the most part been developed by Roger Trigg in *Reason and Commitment.*[17]

(i) When the standards of truth and reasonable belief that apply to any individual are those, and only those, that the individual decides to accept for himself, then it is not possible for him (provided he observes the standards to which he subscribes) to hold a false belief or to believe or act irrationally. In these circumstances, no distinction between knowledge and belief can be drawn, and there is no ground for claiming that anyone is fanatical or prejudiced. As Trigg observes, ' "truth" becomes a consequence of belief and commitment and not a reason for it'.[18] In such a scheme, it is not simply that we can only speak of what is true or rational for this or that person, but we cannot intelligibly employ the concepts of true and rational at all. For where it is not possible to distinguish error or irrationality, neither is it possible to distinguish truth or rationality.

(ii) Human beings who hold radically different beliefs do communicate with one another through language, and translations are effectively made from one language or conceptual system into another. An essential condition for such communication and translation of beliefs, as well as for genuine argument, is that claims may be true or false, may constitute good or bad reasons, as such—and not simply from the point of view of the speaker. This, in turn, presupposes that there are not as many worlds as there are ways of talking, but various conceptual perspectives from which the same world may be described and interpreted in ways that may be true or false. Anyone who followed a relativism of conceptual systems or forms of life quite literally would be forced to restrict his assertions about what is the case to those who share his form of life. Even his account of relativism could claim to be true (and intelligible?) only from the viewpoint of that group.

(iii) If the commitment to conceptual systems on which issues of truth and rationality depend is finally non-rational, it must be assumed that we cannot question whether the beliefs that characterize such a system may themselves be mistaken, or whether it may be more reasonable to accept one system rather than another. To support this assumption, it would have to be further supposed that these conceptual systems (forms of life, etc.) exist as completely self-contained units and that there are no general or common-sense criteria for true or reasonable belief.

It also seems to be assumed that we may choose whether to be committed to the conditions of rationality or not. But these conditions apply to us regardless of our commitment. We may choose to reject them, but still we cannot escape acting irrationally.

The talk of ultimate non-rational commitments seems to reflect the image of man referred to earlier in which each individual is, at centre, an isolated will that is not constrained by reasons, but in a pure act of freedom determines what it shall find acceptable as reasons, not only in morality but in science as well. In this context, I can only refer the reader again to Iris Murdoch's critical discussion of this view of man. In summary, the alternative she defends is expressed as follows:

> Man is not a combination of an impersonal rational thinker and a personal will. He is a unified being who sees, and who desires in accordance with what he sees, and who has some continual slight control over the direction and focus of his vision.[19]

(iv) Serious exponents of relativism are not able to maintain a strict and consistent relativist position. The general problem they face is that anyone who adopts a thoroughgoing relativism, who rejects the possibility of objective criteria of truth and rationality, cannot even consistently assume that he is correct. Even if he begins to argue seriously, he must assume inconsistently that the claims one makes may be true or false.

The problem is illustrated in Kuhn's interpretation of scientific knowledge. Although he asserts that different paradigms of scientific inquiry are incommensurable, he confidently undertakes a comparative and historical study that yields conclusions about what is presumed to be, in some sense, a common enterprise. He even suggests that scientists can go wrong in following a given paradigm, and detects a pattern of progress, not simply change, within science. Kuhn also accepts the truth of the psychological and sociological explanations as to why scientists at a given time support a particular paradigm. If he were consistent, he would have to treat such explanations as relative to the conceptual schemes within which their proponents work. In terms of his relativist assumptions, Kuhn's own conclusions cannot even make a claim to be true–except on those who find themselves committed to the paradigm of inquiry that he himself employs.

The relativists among the philosophically inclined sociologists of knowledge, such as Karl Mannheim, have also inconsistently supposed that they were giving a true account of the group-relative nature of belief (both as a matter of fact and as an epistemological theory). In theories of this kind, there is often an elite (e.g. Mannheim's 'socially unattached intelligentsia') that escapes the conceptual boundaries of this or that social group, and to which their authors belong. Despite the inconsistency with relativism, it is argued that the conceptual perspective of the elite is preferable to that of any other group.

Anything like an adequate critical comment on the beliefs about knowledge and learning that, in Rathbone's view, are presupposed in the practice of open education would take us far beyond the limits of this essay. Yet, as we saw earlier, these beliefs offer a rationale for treating what approaches the limit of unqualified intellectual autonomy as a basic normative factor in the conduct of education. I should therefore at least refer briefly to some respects in which I believe the theory is mistaken.

(i) Perhaps the most serious weakness is the theory's simplistic image of learning: each human organism independently interacting with its environment and deriving its own concepts out of this experience through the workings of its 'concept-forming mechanism' or mind. There is a substantial range of concepts for which this abstractionist view simply cannot account.[20] In any case, as human beings we are not isolated individuals constructing our private realm of concepts out of the data of our raw experience. We acquire concepts, and learn to apply them in interpreting and understanding our experience, through the social process of learning language as an integral part of various human practices. The theory's individualistic view of man ignores the fact that each human being develops as such in the context of a pre-existing world of shared meanings, that mind is not an innate endowment, there to be flexed like a muscle, but an achievement that depends largely on our gaining access to the inheritance of shared meanings.[21]

(ii) There is an obvious sense in which all the ways of classifying knowledge are man-made. However, it does not follow from this, as Rathbone seems to suppose, that they must be entirely matters of convention or, if conventional, that they are necessarily arbitrary. One need not even argue, as Hirst has done[22], that there are several logically distinct basic forms of knowledge. It is sufficient to point out that a particular method of inquiry, a group of closely related key concepts, a significant common human purpose may severally or together provide a non-arbitary basis for the organization of knowledge.

Apart from incurring the general criticisms against subjectivism, the emphasis that Rathbone places on the idiosyncratic character of knowledge seems to reflect a confusion between the sequence of psychological activities in which a person learns and the logical criteria that apply to the outcomes of his learning (that is, whether what he has learnt is knowledge or false belief, whether he has acquired a moral concept of honesty or a scientific concept of energy, and so on). In relation to the practice of education, the consequence of this confusion is that an account of how children learn is also thought to determine what they should learn.

A curious feature of the theory of open education as Rathbone presents it is that, despite the uncompromising rejection of objective forms of knowledge, it seems only to entail that 'in certain rather basic situations, traditional academic objectives are not considered to be the first order of priority'.[23] On the basis of the general claims about the nature of knowledge, one would expect that such objectives could have no place in the order of priorities at all.

(iii) Rathbone's discussion of the theoretical assumptions of the open classroom also illustrates the general problem of inconsistency that relativists face. If the supporters of the open classroom consistently accept the anarchistic epistemology that Rathbone describes, they cannot argue that the assumptions of traditional schooling are mistaken or that their own style of education embodies correct principles and priorities. They can merely state that the position they take is true for them because they believe it to be so, and acknowledge that the same must be said for the supporters of any other view of education.

As we have seen, various forms of anarchistic epistemology (including the relativism of conceptual systems to which people ultimately adhere by virtue of a non-rational commitment) allow for, and in fact require, the exercise of 'pure' intellectual autonomy. I have suggested briefly why the price they exact for this autonomy is intolerably high. It can be bought only at the cost of eliminating in effect the distinction between knowledge and belief, between rational and irrational thought and action. Certainly the kind of personal autonomy that makes these demands cannot be an aim of liberal education; for liberal education is primarily an induction into the standards of truth and rationality and other domains of value as they have been articulated in the ongoing public traditions of human understanding.

It is difficult to know what kind of education could be justified, given the assumptions of unqualified personal autonomy. If human beings are thought to be autonomous from birth or, at least, if it is supposed that the potentiality unfolds spontaneously, there is clearly no need for an education that promotes autonomy. In so far as such autonomous beings can be said to be educated, the only appropriate method would seem to be that of personal discovery. But if this method were taken quite literally, its effectiveness for most individuals would be very limited, and it would make impossible the cumulative achievement of knowledge and skill from one generation to another. Nor would it be possible to apply any public criteria to the quality of what an individual discovered for himself. It could not be said, for example, that a conclusion he had reached was false, or insignificant, or biased. It is difficult to see how we can speak seriously at all of the education of human beings if they are interpreted as asocial and ahistorical atoms. Even the environment that A.S. Neill established at Summerhill was not entirely consistent with his beliefs about the complete autonomy of each child's wants, and the dire consequences of any kind of uninvited adult influence. He did not seem to notice, for example, that children at Summerhill were not necessarily free to do what they wanted when left alone; both the wants they had and the ways they satisfied them depended upon the options available at Summerhill.

The general objections that have been raised do not necessarily apply to emotional autonomy. It is an arguable moral ideal and can probably be promoted by some form of liberal education. At least there does not seem to be any incongruity between the general characteristics of liberal education and this ideal. Given the role of the emotions in human action and the consequences of involvement and commitment, the question is whether there is more loss than gain in attempting to achieve emotional autonomy. Without arguing the case here, I believe that the loss does outweigh the gain. The detachment by which a person refrains from egoistically consuming what he loves seems to me a more admirable ideal to develop than the egoistic detachment by which one carefully avoids loving, or loving too much.

Kant's Defence of Rational Autonomy

To come back to the question of intellectual and moral autonomy, although an anarchistic epistemology provides the basis for a substantial form of personal autonomy, I have argued that it cannot be justified and that autonomy of this kind cannot be an aim of liberal education. The question now is whether there can be a significant version of personal autonomy that is nevertheless hedged in by the conditions of rationality and morality in human thought and action. Whether such a concession seriously dilutes the claim about autonomy clearly depends, in part, on how the conditions for rational and moral behaviour are interpreted. Historically the main effort to defend autonomy in a strong sense, while still acknowledging the constraints of rational criteria, has been made in the moral sphere. Kant's defence of moral autonomy of this kind is the most distinguished and influential. It clearly reverberates in the contemporary theories of moral development proposed by Piaget and Kohlberg.

According to Kant, who in turn was influenced by Rousseau, each individual is autonomous in that he decides upon and legislates to himself those principles of action which he sees are fitting to his nature as a member of a community of free and equal rational beings. In the moral sphere, each one of us is subject only to his own will as a rational being; but the principles that we prescribe for ourselves in this way must also be willed as universal laws applying equally to all free and rational beings. For Kant, the basis of autonomy is 'the idea of the will of every rational being as a will which makes universal law'.[24]

The first difficulty with this doctrine is that an individual cannot seriously will a universal law without being prepared to challenge the autonomy of everyone else.[25] No conflict arises as long as every individual does in fact will the same law for himself and everyone else. But it is not the case that human beings always agree about universal laws of morality, and we cannot suppose that they must necessarily agree, without questioning the autonomy of their decision. Kant tried to ensure a consensus of sovereign wills by appealing to an obscure metaphysical entity, the rational self.

A second and more basic problem is that of making sense of individuals legislating universal laws to themselves. In Kant's theory, the plausibility of the metaphor of self-legislation depends again on the metaphysical distinction he draws between the noumenal or rational self and the phenomenal self. Apart from the difficulty with this distinction, there is, as Kurt Baier has recently argued, a logical impossibility in claiming that each individual is subject only to laws of his own making. 'If no member of a society were subject to the will of any other, then there would simply be no law and so no legislation including self-legislation.'[26]

As Baier also points out, the metaphor of legislation is inappropriate to the activities of accepting, applying, criticizing, or even reforming moral principles. To the extent that Kant's criterion of universalization is useful, it is not a legislative mechanism, but a guide for judging the moral adequacy of a rule. While various aspects of Kant's moral theory may consistently be adopted in the practice of education, there is one decisive reason why his ideal of the autonomous rational self-legislator cannot be an aim of education: it is simply that there cannot be such a person.

Moral Autonomy and Objectivity

In the contemporary view of moral autonomy, there seem to be elements of both the Kantian self-legislator and the older belief in the supremacy of individual conscience, shorn now of its religious affiliations. The latter holds that an individual must be completely free to follow his own moral beliefs and that his own conscience (or what he judges he should do) is the final arbiter of morality in his case. Where this element dominates, autonomy slips from the hold of rationality that Kant attempted to place upon it. It is simply another way of talking about pure autonomy in the moral sphere, and is subject to the criticisms that have already been made. I wish to consider here more closely whether the not uncommon mixture of the self-legislator and personal conscience theories of autonomy can perhaps escape the charge of subjectivism.

H.D. Aiken illustrates the attempt to interpret moral autonomy in this fashion and yet to argue for a form of moral objectivity that is compatible with it. According to Aiken, objectivity in making a moral judgment amounts to an impartial consideration of all the moral values to which one is committed that are related to the decision. As he says, when there is question of the objectivity of a moral judgment we have made, 'our task is always and only to look beyond it to the other relevant commitments which we ourselves acknowledge'.[27] Aiken also seems to claim that a moral judgment is verified if it satisfies the conditions for objectivity.[28] While his interpretation places stress on internal consistency and authenticity, it is really only a demanding form of subjectivism rather than a version of objectivity. Perhaps it permits us to say that an individual is inconsistent with his own moral beliefs in reaching a certain decision or holding a particular principle. However, if a person sincerely claims that he is not being inconsistent, I am not sure that on Aiken's theory anyone else can justifiably challenge the claim. Certainly, the theory does not allow for the possibility that anyone could sincerely and consistently hold moral principles and make moral judgments that were nevertheless false or inadequate.

Aiken's own reference to moral cummunities within which argument is possible provides the context for a more satisfactory account of moral objectivity. If we are talking about a genuine moral community of beliefs and practices, and not simply the fortuitous agreement of isolated wills, it then becomes necessary to modify the notion of moral autonomy from which Aiken starts. I would wish to go further still in drawing the boundaries of moral objectivity. No doubt serious moral argument is empirically very difficult among those who belong to different moral communities, and some agreement on moral beliefs and practices would seem to be a necessary condition for such argument. However Aiken seems to suppose a series of discrete moral communities rather than a pattern of significant common and overlapping elements among all moral communities. Moreover, as he allows that the autonomous person is a rational self-legislator, he can hardly reject the possibility of comparatively assessing the adequacy of different moral practices and systems against criteria of rationality. It is outside the range of this paper to develop this point any further. A clear illustration of the kind of dimensions that may be applied is given in Morris Ginsberg's 'On the Diversity of Morals'.[29] As Ginsberg notes, the relativists, whether individual or social, are in an awkward position in that their views are more likely to encourage the imposition of moral beliefs and practices rather than respect for those who differ, unless they inconsistently assert the universal validity of a principle of tolerance.

Whatever may distinguish personal autonomy in the moral domain once due regard is given to the criteria of rationality and the communal character of moral practices, I think it is clear that objectivity, to the fullest extent that it can be achieved, is an essential characteristic of moral maturity. We should not confuse, as Aiken seems to, the questions of objectivity and truth. Although the two are closely related, objectivity is predicated of attitudes and procedures, while truth is predicated of statements. The development of objectivity in a moral agent—for example, critically reflecting on one's own assumptions, being aware of the conditions that shape one's values, understanding other points of view, submitting one's principles and judgments to the criticism of others—is an outcome to which liberal education is immediately and evidently directed. Whether autonomy is also an aim depends on the extent to which it can be reconciled with the practices required for objectivity.

The Constraints of Rationality and Reason

In the terminology I used earlier, the difficulties in defending a strong sense of moral autonomy, while accepting criteria of rationality, really refer to the intellectual aspect of autonomy. I wish now to comment more generally on the kind of constraints these criteria entail, and on the sense in which one may still speak of intellectual autonomy as an ideal to be fostered through education.

Rationality, as distinct from non-rationality, consists in the ability to generalize about the present and the particular. It depends, as Jonathan Bennett has argued[30], on the possession of a symbolic system in which both universal and dated statements can be made. Human languages are of this kind. The first constraints required for rationality are, therefore, those involved in the acquisition and use of language itself. As we saw earlier, these are by no means sufficient. Rationality, in the sense in which it is contrasted with irrationality, introduces additional normative conditions. Although being rational in this sense is not synonymous with being reasonable, the distinction between rational and irrational turns on the question of what reasons are relevant and adequate for holding a belief or acting in a certain way. Irrationality is at the extreme end of the continuum: one believes or acts despite adequate reasons to the contrary. Because of this, it is possible for a person to believe or act rationally but not very reasonably (e.g. one may rationally pursue an unreasonable end). As we are concerned with an ideal of human life, we must interpret rationality in the context of the more rigorous criteria of reasonableness.

In very broad terms, these criteria commit us to observing the principle of non-contradiction, to being consistent, to adopting the methods of inquiry and verification that are appropriate to different kinds of questions, to caring enough to ensure that our arguments are cogent and that the evidence for our beliefs is sufficient. What must be stressed is the public or communal aspect of reasonable belief, for what count as adequate and relevant reasons is not a matter of private judgment. Whether we are referring to common-sense knowledge or to specialized areas of thought, both general criteria and specific claims are to be tested and established in practice by the agreement of those who are competent to judge.[31] Every tradition of inquiry that is seriously concerned with reasoned belief demands the attitudes and procedures of objectivity as a basic condition for its participants. Liberal education is, by definition, the process by which one gains access to the conceptual schemes, methods of thought, criteria of reasoned belief and objectivity of at least some of the specialized traditions of human thought. To develop the habit of self-criticism and the other ingredients of objectivity within the context of these traditions is clearly a fundamental aim of this kind of education.

Autonomy as an Aim of Liberal Education

If there is a question of trying to achieve personal autonomy in anything like the strict sense, then it is clearly paradoxical to suggest that this can be done through induction into the main public traditions of rational thought and expression. From the point of view of classical rationalism, these traditions and the nature of personal autonomy are interpreted in such a way that the paradox is avoided. The condition that autonomy should be rational is not regarded as a restriction on personal self-determination. In the classical rationalist interpretation (of which Kant's self-legislator is one version) personal autonomy consists in willing what one knows to be rationally necessary. Thus initiation into the forms of understanding is not only compatible with personal autonomy but a necessary condition for its attainment.[32] I shall not comment on the adequacy of this concept of autonomy or the distinctive beliefs of classical rationalism that underlie it. Assuming that the defence of objectivity and rationality against the claims of anarchistic epistemology does not depend on these beliefs, what I wish to ask is whether there is a sense in which 'autonomy' can appropriately describe a fundamental aim of liberal education.

In relation to this question, I am assuming two general conditions that the practice of liberal education should satisfy. The first concerns the way in which the traditions of rational inquiry are interpreted. The crucial difference is whether they are seen as immutable and unquestionable moulds of human thought and action or as ceaseless efforts at understanding and achievement carried forward from one generation to another–in Eliot's phrase, 'the common pursuit of true judgment'. I am referring to the kind of liberal education that reflects the latter of these interpretations. The continual critical reform of the traditions of rational inquiry is itself a tradition. However it does not exist independently, but is a way of engaging in any of the particular traditions.

The second condition is that the dominant emphases in the procedures of liberal education should be upon the understanding of what is learned; the acceptance of methods and theories on the basis of the evidence that justifies them, not simply on the authority of the teacher or the experts; the development of the skills of inquiry in a way that depends on reflection and imagination, a combination of what is fashionably called convergent and divergent thinking; the critical appreciation of the scope and limitations of each of the main forms of thought and expression and the relation in which they stand to one another.

Granted that liberal education in practice attempts to satisfy these two conditions as fully as possible, it is clear that it must be aiming at the development of some degree of intellectual autonomy. However I am still not satisfied that we should describe the outcome in these terms. When the qualifications have been duly acknowledged, we can speak of autonomy only in an attenuated sense. Even those who have achieved the mastery of experts in any field of inquiry must, to a considerable degree, trust the findings of fellow experts. The range within which an expert in any field might initiate a significant revision or breakthrough–particularly affecting its basic methods–is relatively restricted. Even in these cases, the judgment of significance has to be upheld by the community of experts.

If these are the sorts of limitations on the autonomy of those who have achieved mastery, how much more so for those who have achieved the level of understanding and competence that may reasonably be expected through liberal education? While liberal education may provide the basis for mastery in some aspect of science, or the humanities, or the arts, its direct purpose is to achieve an integrated induction into the broad range of these public symbolic structures. Even if liberal education were restricted to an intellectual elite, it would not aim at developing the level of mastery at which one might exercise some degree of significant autonomy. The language of autonomy seems even more unrealistic and misleading, if we are prepared to entertain the radical possibility of providing liberal education for the majority of people in our society; and, apart from any other reasons, as long as we are serious about having everyone participate intelligently in political democracy, I do not see that we have any alternative but to try.

Being reasonable does not depend on being autonomous, even when autonomy is interpreted as discovering for oneself the rules that apply rather than deciding on one's own rules. In fact, there would be little scope for reasonable thought and action if we did not, for much of the time, employ theories and rules that have been worked out and tested by others. Whether we consider, for example, learning and using language in everyday life, or examining the validity of an argument or the claims of a scientific experiment, or even making direct observations, we must inevitably rely to some extent on the authority of others.

As I have already suggested, a fundamental aim of liberal education is the development of the skills, attitudes, and values that are bound up with objectivity. This aim cannot be adequately realized unless we also learn to reflect critically on the traditions of rational inquiry themselves. It might be said that here the objective of liberal education is to encourage personal autonomy. However, I would point out that the habit of critically assessing the 'conventional wisdom' is not promoted for the sake of personal autonomy as such, but as the best way of ensuring that our beliefs and values will be as thoroughly justified as is possible. Independence of judgment, whether on moral or other issues, is a desirable characteristic only to the extent that a person is qualified to judge. An educator may not justifiably encourage critical inquiry except in the context of trying to develop skills and knowledge relevant to making judgments in a given area.

In relation to the other outcomes of liberal education that are loosely, if not misleadingly, described as personal autonomy, I think it preferable to speak of them in such terms as the following: achieving an understanding of the main methods of thought, conceptual schemes and bodies of knowledge, together with a critical appreciation of their strengths and limitations both in themselves and in relation to one another. The level of understanding should be sufficient for intelligently interpreting one's own experience; for expressing oneself with clarity and precision; for making informed and responsible choices; for following intelligently the debate of experts—especially when their claims affect the general conduct of life; for critically assessing the programs of political leaders; for seeing through and resisting persuasive strategies of empty rhetoric and propaganda; for responding with discrimination to fashionable trends whether in art, life-styles, political theories, popular entertainment, or whatever. This list is not intended to be exhaustive. It mainly stresses aspects of a constructive or critical response, rather than a contribution, to the forms of culture. This emphasis reflects, I believe, the character and scope of liberal education. For while it is a desirable, if not necessary, basis for a constructive—perhaps even creative—contribution, it is not sufficient.

In regard to the process of liberal education, teachers who are committed to the kinds of outcomes I have listed must, if consistent, be prepared to observe the conditions of objectivity in their own teaching, and always to provide the most adequate reasons that are within the capacity of their students. While there are moral grounds for acting in this way, it is not necessary to appeal to the students' actual or potential autonomy. It is sufficient for the teacher to recognize them as persons in the process of developing their capacity to choose on the basis of reasons, and to accept that reasons may be good or bad. It is precisely in reference to the criteria of objectivity and reasonable belief, which are such primary concerns of liberal education, that questions about the conditions that distinguish educating from indoctrinating, the kind of persuasion that is rationally and morally defensible in teaching, when a teacher should and should not be neutral on an issue, and so on, are to be resolved.

I do not wish to imply that liberal education is not closely related to the achievement of human freedom. In gaining familiarity with the main symbolic forms of culture, one also greatly enlarges the range of significant choices that one can make. The outcome also involves a change in the quality of choice, not simply in its scope. The fundamental objective of learning with understanding cannot be realized unless the learner comes to grasp principles for himself, and thus to achieve intellectual independence from the mere authority of teachers, textbooks, experts, and cult heroes.

If the engagement in liberal education is conducted properly, a person should reach the point at which the important choices he makes are his own in the sense that he applies for himself the relevant criteria of criticism and evaluation, and sees for himself why these criteria are the relevant ones to employ. Provided we recognize the public criteria of knowledge and the public standards of excellence within which an individual exercises such intellectual independence, we may metaphorically refer to him as autonomous in contrast to the person whose choices are in effect usually made for him by others.

However, to speak in terms of autonomy versus heteronomy is, I believe, to draw the line of distinction too sharply. The question is not whether we accept the public forms of reasoned inquiry, moral practice, and artistic expression, or accept the authority and judgment of others, or hold deeply-felt commitments, but how we accept or hold them. The fundamental distinction is between a blind, unreflective, mechanical acceptance and one that is informed, critical, discriminating, adaptive. If the latter (which includes the reasoned acceptance of the authority of others) is to be described as intellectual autonomy, there is no difficulty in counting autonomy as an aim of liberal education. However it must be recognized that this is a substantially different concept of autonomy from the one that is related to an anarchistic epistemology and widely invoked in contemporary educational theory. It is precisely because of this difference (and because educationists often leave the underlying epistemological issues unexamined) that the invocation of personal autonomy, whether as a criterion for the process or the outcome of education, tends to function as a slogan. In fact, it seems that personal autonomy has become one of those idols in whose name the effort to make liberal education available to as many people as possible is being betrayed.

Notes and References

[1] A.S. Kaufman, Comments on Frankena's 'The concept of education today',

In J.F. Doyle (Ed.), *Educational Judgements*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, p.47.

[2] J. Feinberg, The idea of a free man, In Doyle, op.cit., p.160. Neither Kaufmann nor Feinberg implies a metaphysical as distinct from an empirical self.

[3] D. Riesman, with N. Glazer and R. Denney, *The Lonely Crowd*, Abridged ed., New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961, Chapter 1.

[4] R.S. Peters, Freedom and the development of the free man, In Doyle, op.cit., p.124.

[5] S. Hampshire, *Freedom of the Individual*, New York: Harper & Row, 1965, p.32.

[6] I. Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970.

[7] R.P. Wolff, *In Defence of Anarchism*, New York: Harper & Row, 1970, p.15.

[8] R.F. Dearden, Autonomy and education, In R.F. Dearden, P.H. Hirst, R.S. Peters (Eds). *Education and the Development of Reason*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, p.453.

[9]

> Such an anarchistic epistemology–for this is what our theories of error now turn out to be–is not only a better means for improving knowledge, or of understanding history. It is also more appropriate for a free man to use than are its rigorous and 'scientific' alternatives.

P. Feyerabend, Against method: outline of an anarchistic theory of knowledge, In M. Rodner and S. Winokur (Eds), *Minnesota Studies in Philosophy of Science*, Vol. IV, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1970, p.21.

[10] T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

[11] T. Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture*, London: Faber & Faber, 1970, especially Chapter 7, Science: a technocratic trap; *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1972, 56–61; P.L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1966.

[12] C.H. Rathbone (Ed.), *Open Education: The Informal Classroom*, New York: Citation Press, 1971; R.S. Barth, *Open Education*, New York: Agathon Press, 1972.

[13] C.H. Rathbone, The implicit rationale of the open education classroom, In Rathbone, op.cit., p.102.

[14] ibid., pp.100, 104.

[15] ibid., pp.106–108.

[16] Some of the contemporary critics (e.g. Roszak) seem to have confused the general question of objectivity with the particular interpretation of it in the positivist tradition (the doctrine of objectivism). It is not uncommon for writers to refer to Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge* as a decisive refutation of scientific objectivity. What he attacks to good effect, however, is the doctrine of objectivism What he tries to construct–whether successfully or not is another matter–is a theory of knowledge at once personal and objective. In supporting objectivity in knowledge, I am not assuming the

rationalist view that, in our attempts to understand the physical world or the normative standards of human action, we must suppose a perfectly consistent system. But if the world (or human conduct) is such that it cannot be accounted for in strictly consistent theories, then this is itself a fact about the world and our efforts to know it.

[17] R. Trigg, *Reason and Commitment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973.

[18] ibid., p.23

[19] Murdoch, op.cit., p.40.

[20] Cf. P. Geach's criticism of abstractionism in *Mental Acts*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957.
For a general critique of the theory of knowledge supported by Rathbone, see L.F. Claydon, Content and process in curriculum construction, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 1974, 6(2), 43–53.

[21] This view is developed by a number of recent philosophers of education. See, for example, R.S. Peters, Education as initiation, In R.D. Archambault (Ed.), *Philosophical Analysis and Education*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965; I. Scheffler, Philosophical models of teaching, In R.S. Peters (Ed.), *The Concept of Education*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967; P.H. Hirst, Liberal education and the nature of knowledge, In Archambault, op.cit.

[22] P.H. Hirst, Liberal education and the nature of knowledge, In Archambault, op.cit.

[23] Rathbone, op.cit., p.105.

[24] I. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, Trans. by H.J. Paton, New York: Harper & Row, 1964, p.98.

[25] As Berlin has pointed out, Kant's individualistic doctrine lends itself ironically to a totalitarian interpretation.

> If I am a legislator or a ruler, I must assume that if the law I impose is rational (and I can only consult my own reason) it will automatically be approved by all the members of my society so far as they are rational beings. For if they disapprove, they must, *pro tanto*, be irrational; then they will need to be repressed by reason: whether their own or mine cannot matter, for the pronouncements of reason must be the same in all minds.

I. Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, London: Oxford University Press, 1969, pp.152–153.

[26] K. Baier, Moral autonomy as an aim of moral education, In G. Langford and D.J. O'Connor (Eds), *New Essays in the Philosophy of Education*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, p.102. On Kant's idea of legislating for oneself, Anscombe comments:

> [It] is as absurd as if, in these days when majority votes command great respect, one were to call each reflective decision a man made vote resulting in a majority which as a matter of proportion is overwhelming, for it is always 1–0. The concept of legislation requires superior power in the legislator.

G.E.M. Anscombe, Modern moral philosophy, In J.J. Thomson and G. Dworkin (Eds), *Ethics*, New York: Harper & Row, 1968, pp.187–188.

[27] H.D. Aiken, *Reason and Conduct*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962, p.162.

[28] ibid., p.168.

[29] M. Ginsberg, *On the Diversity of Morals*, London: Mercury Books, 1956, title essay, especially pp.121–126.

[30] J. Bennett, *Rationality*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1964.

[31] The relationship between intersubjective agreement and the attainment of objectivity and truth is a complex one. Such agreement functions both as a criterion and a condition of objectivity. However in neither case is objectivity just a matter of agreement. In relation to the former, a claim is not held objectively–much less is it true–simply because a large number of people agree about it. As Scriven has pointed out, it is an error of positivist methodology to confuse the qualitative and quantitative senses in which 'objective' and 'subjective' may be contrasted. (M. Scriven, Objectivity and subjectivity in educational research, In L.G. Thomas (Ed.), *Philosophical Redirection of Educational Research: The Seventy-First Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972, pp.95-97.) However, even when qualitative criteria are observed, agreement does not constitute objectivity or truth, although it provides a crucial test. Some measure of agreement at the methodological level on the qualitative criteria of objectivity, as well as on the use of concepts, is a necessary condition for making and settling claims to objectivity in particular cases. However this does not mean that the question of objectivity must in the end be just a matter of convention. For what may justifiably be agreed upon is constrained by characteristics of the world and of human beings that do not depend on convention. For a discussion of objectivity, see D.W. Hamlyn, Objectivity, In Dearden, Hirst and Peters, op.cit. (I am not convinced that Hamlyn gives a satisfactory account of the ultimately non-conventional nature of 'forms of life'.)

[32] As Berlin notes in describing the rationalist view, 'Knowledge liberates not by offering us more open possibilities amongst which we can make our choice, but by preserving us from the frustration of attempting the impossible'. Berlin, op.cit., p.144.

Part III: Curriculum

The curriculum as the systematic program of teaching and learning designed to promote the qualities of an educated person is clearly the object on which all aspects of educational theory converge. As Dewey emphasized, the curriculum is planned as a selective transmission of culture; it is intended to filter out elements thought to be trivial or undesirable and to concentrate on the beliefs and practices in the culture that are of most worth. Thus, while explanatory principles and theories may play an important part in the design of the curriculum, it is obvious that the work is fundamentally an engagement in normative educational theory. For these reasons, all the chapters in this book are related in various ways to the question of the nature of the curriculum. In this section the discussion focuses on a number of issues more immediately within curriculum theory.

Chapter 5 examines the topic of an integrated curriculum in relation to the systematic bodies of knowledge on which most curricula at least indirectly draw. The question is what limits, if any, the organizing principles of disciplines and the varieties of knowledge place on the design of integrated studies. Several recent attempts to find a basis of unity are discussed: the structure of disciplines as in Bruner and Schwab; the identification of several logically distinct forms of knowledge or meaning (Hirst, Phenix); the view that disciplines and subject boundaries are simply instruments of social control (e.g. M.F.D. Young). These positions are criticized for misinterpreting, in various ways, the nature of disciplines. (The last is challenged, in particular, because of its relativism.) Disciplines do not have a single logical structure of concepts and theories, nor does each discipline exhibit one of several more inclusive forms of knowledge (distinguished on criteria of logic, method, and epistemology). In addition to the logical and epistemological aspects of disciplines, the fact that they are institutionally organized and historically evolving collective enterprises is crucial to their understanding. When one comes to the detailed questions of what may rationally be claimed or believed in disciplined inquiry, the answers depend on specific criteria and procedures bound up with the particular range of problems and aims shared by the members of a discipline.

In the curriculum of liberal education–given its emphasis on rational understanding–particular care has to be taken not to blur the distinctive character of disciplines. However, without assuming several unique forms of knowledge, disciplines can be grouped according to the predominant kind of epistemological objective they pursue (e.g. explaining in terms of causal generalization, interpreting, evaluating). This range provides a guide for planning the areas of a common curriculum in liberal education. The chapter concludes by referring to the kinds of integrated studies that are compatible with the nature of disciplines.

The second chapter in this section examines some related approaches to curriculum evaluation that challenge the means-end model proposed by Tyler and developed by recent exponents of behavioural objectives. The alternative they advocate is what Stenhouse broadly calls a process model: curriculum planning and evaluation focuses directly on procedures of teaching and learning, not on predetermined objectives. The chapter discusses the version of this model known as 'illuminative' evaluation (as presented in writings by Barry MacDonald, Malcolm Parlett, and David Hamilton).

In assessing the criticism of the objectives model, special attention is given to Stenhouse's arguments. It seems that Stenhouse makes a good case against this model in so far as it interprets objectives in narrowly behaviouristic terms. However his own alternative for curriculum design cannot avoid reference to desired learning outcomes, and these cannot be recognized unless some range of behaviour counts as evidence that they have been achieved.

In relation to illuminative evaluation, it is argued in the first place that, while the proponents stress significant aspects of evaluation ignored by the output measurement approach, the 'anthropological' method they employ is subject to difficulties of its own. Secondly, the notion of curriculum evaluation as description or information giving is criticized as both inadequate and misleading: inadequate because it should make and defend an assessment of the educational value of a curriculum, and misleading because a description of such a complex process as a curriculum in action is bound to reflect important judgments of value. In relation to the last point, some comments are made on MacDonald's interesting claim about the political values that are at least implicit in different methods of curriculum evaluation.

Chapter 5

Integrated Studies and the Nature of Disciplines

Introduction

The widespread enthusiasm for a curriculum in which the parts form some kind of deliberately interrelated pattern reflects a variety of reasons and motives. Many teachers have been attracted to such a curriculum mainly as a reaction to the manifest deficiencies of the traditional rigidly insular subject curriculum. It is likely that what they have wanted is simply a suitable reform of the subject curriculum rather than a radically different program. But some teachers (and educational theorists) have argued positively for the virtues of one or another version of an integrated curriculum. An indication of the nature and diversity of these arguments may be gained from the following sample.

(i) Progressive theorists have urged that the basic principle of curriculum content should be the expressed needs and interests of each child. They claim that if the principle is followed seriously, it not only rules out the pre-packaging of content into distinct academic subjects but generates for each child an integrated pattern of learning. This interpretation has usually gone hand in hand with an ardently romantic vision of the child. Sometimes it has been linked with subjective epistemological claims about each child determining his own knowledge.[1]

(ii) Others, like Dewey, have placed the main stress in education on learning how to solve problems. Given the assumption that there is ultimately a single method for dealing with every kind of problem, it follows that this method provides the integrating principle for the whole work of education.

(iii) Another defence of an integrated curriculum (which would also find support in Dewey) argues on the basis of claims about a fundamental level of unity within the modes of knowledge, and between knowledge, experience and the self.

(iv) In the most recent revival of interest in integrated studies (in the late 1960s), one of the main defences has appealed to the inescapable ideological, or at least political, nature of the selection and organization of knowledge in a curriculum. It is claimed, for example, that the subject-centred curriculum favours elitism and reflects the values that the dominant middle class places on knowledge and its forms. Among other things, an integrated curriculum is said to break down the difference between expert and layman and thus favours an egalitarian ideal of society. The sociologists of knowledge who expound this view usually advocate a relativist interpretation of knowledge. M.F.D. Young not only claims that the selection and organization of knowledge in the curriculum is an instrument of social and political control, but that there is no body of objective knowledge at all.[2] Teachers and curriculum designers who have been influenced by these sociologists of knowledge may not have given much attention to the underlying epistemological claims, but I think they have been impressed by the reputed egalitarian virtues of integrated studies.

(v) Some of the arguments for an integrated curriculum have referred directly to educational considerations. For example, in relation to the process of learning, it has been claimed that students (particularly those who have little or no academic interest) are likely to be better motivated when the various forms of theoretical knowledge are studied in the context of a significant practical issue; and in relation to the purposes of education, it has been claimed that not all the learning outcomes that should be promoted by the school can be achieved through the study of the distinct disciplines.

(vi) Finally, some people favour an integrated curriculum mainly because of a temperamental urge to see things fitted together in a neat and unified pattern, or because they believe such an arrangement is aesthetically preferable.

Although this list is not exhaustive, it is sufficient to illustrate the main kinds of philosophical questions that inevitably arise in the discussion of an integrated curriculum. Apart from comments that might be made on the senses in which 'integration' is used in relation to curriculum, these questions involve two general topics: the way in which education and the role of the school ought to be interpreted, and the nature of knowledge. In this chapter I shall concentrate on aspects of the second topic, although it will be necessary to refer briefly to the first.

On the nature of education and schooling, I shall assume that we are referring to the process of education during adolescence and to the role for which the school is cast in this process. It is evident that the question of how the parts of an educational program can be fitted together presupposes the question of what we think the school should be doing in the name of education. I shall not attempt to deal even cursorily with the full range of opinions currently held on this large topic. What I wish to stress is that there are significant differences over the place that should be given to a systematic study of the products and methods of the main modes of thought in human culture. As a consequence, what may be said about the nature of knowledge has an uncertain relevance to curriculum integration.

This point can be illustrated by a brief review of some of the diverse interpretations of the proper role of the secondary school.

> The purpose of the secondary school is to help each adolescent learn how to satisfy his or her felt needs and interests.

If this theory is taken literally there is no guaranteed place for any systematic study of the major modes of thought; it is possible that they may not be studied even unsystematically.

> In the secondary school, students should concentrate on the study of significant problems in the contemporary world (e.g. war, peace, poverty, relations between races) and on the development of the skills and knowledge needed for effective participation in the main institutions of their society (e.g. marriage, trade unions, the political process).

This program could hardly be implemented without drawing heavily on the modes of thought, but they would not necessarily be examined directly or in any systematic way.[3]

> The main emphasis in the secondary school should be on learning how to think. The focus of attention should be on the method (or methods) of inquiry employed in the various modes of thought; the established content they have generated is less significant as an educational objective.

In this approach, the methodological aspects of the modes of thought are studied systematically—although they tend to be detached from the modes of thought as these exist as living cultural traditions.

> The distinctive role of the secondary school is to provide a systematic introduction to the major modes of thought, not as a prelude to the professional life of a scholar but for an intelligent participation in the critical and reflective domains of culture.

In this view (which I believe to be most satisfactory), questions about the nature of knowledge, both content and method, are crucially relevant for determining how the modes of thought should be studied as constituents of a liberal education and, more specifically, for any decision on the character of an integrated curriculum.

Although the significance of an inquiry into the nature of the modes of thought for the question of curriculum integration varies with each of these (and other) interpretations, I think it can be claimed that such an inquiry has some bearing in all cases. Even the doctrine of felt needs and interests is usually not, in fact, an exception. Apart from the felt interest that some proportion of adolescents may be presumed to have in exploring various cultural modes of thought, teachers who invoke the doctrine do not usually take it literally. That is, in practice they are not prepared to abdicate their moral responsibility to the common good or to the adolescents themselves, who may have very inadequate notions of what their needs and long-term interests are.[4]

It is difficult to see how any serious theory of education and of the role of the school can fail to include some deliberate attention to the public modes of thought in which are expressed the reflective self-conscious aspects of a culture. Otherwise there would hardly be any point in having a distinct institution of schooling—at least beyond the elementary stage.[5] In any case, to the extent that the acquisition of these modes of thought (both as ways of thinking and bodies of belief) is given any part in the process of education, what can be said about the way in which knowledge is developed, tested, and organized must be *prima facie* relevant to the way its aspects are related and distinguished in a curriculum. The characteristics of knowledge can be examined from several points of view: historical, psychological, and so on. In this chapter the emphasis is a predominantly philosophical one. The question is what can be said about the unity and diversity of modes of thought in terms of criteria of logic, meaning, truth, rationality.

Interpretations of the Unity of Knowledge

Before the present century, it was commonly assumed that the systems of knowledge constituted, or rested on, knowledge as a unified entity and that it was one of the basic tasks of philosophy to interpret the systems of knowledge as a whole. Some philosophers, such as Descartes, rejected the differences as superficial and reduced all knowledge to a single kind. Others, like Aristotle and Kant, agreed that, while there were logically irreducible kinds of disciplines, there was a principle or perspective in terms of which they formed a unified pattern. At different times, the unifying perspective has been metaphysics, theology, mathematics, biology. In the present century no discipline has been widely accorded this kind of pre-eminence. During this time, philosophers themselves have generally shrunk from the task of investigating the nature of knowledge as a total system. The analytic temper of contemporary philosophy is well illustrated in the enormous growth of the philosophy of separate disciplines. The criteria for distinguishing between true and false belief as well as the necessary conditions of any knowledge (thought to apply to human beings regardless of historical or cultural circumstances) have been much discussed. However, since Descartes, philosophers have usually been preoccupied with the knowing subject in their investigation of these issues.

There now seems to be fairly wide acceptance of Collingwood's scepticism about the possibility of designing an adequate map of the whole of knowledge. In fact, a completely pluralist view of the disciplines seems to prevail. Each discipline possesses among its distinguishing features, some, if not all, of the following: a set of related technical concepts, rules for employing them in meaningful questions and claims, procedures of inquiry, criteria for justifying or verifying claims. In virtue of these characteristics–whatever may be said of others–disciplines are held to be logically autonomous and irreducible to one another. This is not simply to claim a logical difference between, say, physics and literary criticism as modes of inquiry, but also between physics and chemistry. Some philosophers have extended this kind of autonomy to the distinct conceptual schemes and models (paradigms, language games, etc.) that may coexist within what would otherwise be accepted as a single discipline.[6]

Supporters of a pluralist interpretation may agree that all the disciplines are unified in the sense that they have a common general end or function (e.g. to discover what is true, or to develop a coherent way of interpreting the world or some part of it). Such a view must assume that there is at least some common ground on which different modes of justification can be compared. The advocates of discrete paradigms and language games challenge even this degree of unity by arguing that criteria of truth and justification as well as meaning are strictly relative to each system.

During the present century there have been some theorists willing to defend one or another account of the internal unity of all knowledge. I shall refer only summarily to three interpretations.

(i) The idealist belief that each thing is in its essence related to every other thing entails that one cannot know a part of the world without, in some way, knowing the whole. A version of this view is expounded by Michael Oakeshott (who has also written on education). His basic claim is that the concrete experience of reality is the experience of a unified world of ideas; that is, experience is always in the form of thought or judgment, and it is a unified world of ideas because every judgment asserts something about the whole of reality. The refinement of our experience consists in achieving a more and more fully unified coherent world of ideas.

In human history, the effort to realize the concrete whole of experience has often been 'arrested' (to use Oakeshott's word) at various points. At each of these points, a partial homogeneous world of ideas, abstracted from the concrete whole of experience, has been developed. Each of these 'modes of experience' provides a more or less coherent view of the whole of reality; but even at their best they are necessarily partial and defective. In *Experience and its Modes,* Oakeshott examines three highly developed modes: the historical, the scientific, and the practical.[7] In a later work he discusses poetry (or art) as a fourth significant mode. He emphasizes, however, that there is no theoretical limit to their number.

It might seem that if Oakeshott's interpretation could be justified, it would provide a sound philosophical basis for drawing various disciplines together in a curriculum as aspects of a particular mode of experience and for relating the different modes of experience to one another and to the concrete whole of experience. While each may logically subsume several disciplines, Oakeshott makes it clear that the modes of experience themselves are absolutely independent of one another. As abstract perspectives, their combination could not make up the concrete whole of experience. The attempt to conflate the different world of ideas that each involves can only lead to error and confusion (such as the effort to interpret human equality on an arithmetical model).

The kind of integrated curriculum for which *Experience and its Modes* might be said to provide an argument would consist in the study of philosophy for, in Oakeshott's scheme, philosophy is the effort to achieve a coherent concrete experience of the real in its totality. In the curriculum, the modes of experience, because they are facts of experience, would be studied philosophically in order to see how they modified experience and how they must be avoided or overcome so that experience would be enabled to realize its fully coherent and concrete character.[8]

(ii) A quite different metaphysical account of the unity of knowledge has been attempted by logical positivism. In its pure form, all true propositions were regarded as either tautologies or descriptions of what could be observed to be the case. The position underwent various modifications in order to accommodate theoretical concepts and propositions from which descriptions of an observable state of affairs could be deduced. Apart from tautologies, any claim to knowledge must, then, refer directly or indirectly to an observable state of affairs. Any claim that was not verifiable in this way was, in the strict sense, meaningless. While this theory provided a basis for treating all knowledge as being logically of the same kind, it achieved this integration at the cost of an excessively narrow view of even scientific knowledge, and of excluding from the domain of knowledge (and even meaning) all forms of thought that could not meet the prescribed test of observation. This meant the exclusion of religion, art, literature, history, and much of philosophy itself—any claims that involved interpretation, evaluation, appreciation, judgment. Thus the principle on which knowledge was to be integrated also upheld the view that modes of inquiry are rigidly separated into those that deal in facts and those that deal in values, and that there is a logically impenetrable barrier between the two.

(iii) A third attempt to account for the unity of all knowledge is given in John Dewey's theory of the logic of inquiry: the process of intelligence by which indeterminate (or problematic) situations are transformed into ones that are determinate or resolved.[9] While Dewey's position has some elements in common with the previous two, for him the key to the unity of knowledge is to be found in a single all-pervasive problem-solving methodology (which also holds the clue to questions about meaning and truth). The method of inquiry is essentially the same whether one is dealing with problems of physics, history, morality, or art. Dewey also argues that method, as he interprets it, effects the integration of the troublesome dualisms that were such a common feature of traditional philosophy: between knower and known, thought and experience, theory and action, method and subject matter.

Dewey does not suggest that in the curriculum the disciplines should be displaced by an indifferentiated, free-flowing, problem-solving activity or even that the curriculum should be dominated by a few projects developed around major human problems. He emphasizes that each discipline is a community of funded knowledge and skill built up by human beings through the experience of dealing systematically with a certain range of problems. At the same time he argues that the unifying process of inquiry should overshadow the differences in the organization of knowledge. Assuming that his interpretation of the method of inquiry could be justified, it would certainly provide a crucial logical ground on which the content of the different disciplines could be interrelated.

Interpretations of the Organization of Knowledge in Curriculum Theory

During the past 25 years, there have been three important developments in curriculum theory based on interpretations of the way in which knowledge is organized. The first of these is associated with the slogan 'teach the structure of the disciplines'; the second, which shares considerable common ground with the first, adopts a modified pluralism in relation to the distinctiveness of disciplines by arguing that they exhibit a relatively small number of logically distinct fundamental forms of knowledge (realms of meaning, modes of understanding, etc.); the third theory takes the view that the unity or diversity of knowledge has nothing to do with so-called objective logical criteria, but is determined by the interests of the dominant cultural group and its effort to maintain its power.

The Structure of Disciplines: Bruner and Schwab

In the period shortly after the second world war, various curriculum projects were attempting to distinguish the key elements of disciplines in the interests of a more effective pedagogy. These efforts were brought to a focus in the conference at Woods Hole in 1959. The main themes and principles of this conference gained wide publicity and influence through Jerome Bruner's *The Process of Education*[10] and through his own development of them in later writings. Although the conference had been preoccupied with mathematics and the physical sciences, Bruner and other theorists—perhaps the most notable being J.J. Schwab—conceived the notion of structure as applying to the whole spectrum of disciplines.

Although Bruner uses the notion in several different senses, he is primarily concerned with (a) the relationships within the content of a discipline based on the concepts, principles and theories that, at the time, are logically and epistemologically the most significant, and (b) the overall pattern in the presentation of the structure of a discipline for learning (corresponding to the three developmental modes of representation that Bruner identifies).[11] He claims that in each of the main disciplines there are, at any time, certain concepts, principles, and theories that play a relatively fundamental and pervasive role in the tasks of classifying, describing, interpreting, explaining, etc. associated with the purposes of each discipline. The mastery of these structural elements makes the subject more comprehensible, and facilitates retention, recall, and the transfer of learning. They recur throughout the curriculum as its central content, adapted in form to each of the developmental modes of representation.

Bruner does not examine the question of how disciplines may be related to one another (i.e. the structure among disciplines). His view seems to be that each discipline has a distinctive content structure; certainly he does not attempt to reduce disciplines to certain 'types' or 'forms' of knowledge on the basis of common structural features. The main ground in Bruner for the integration of disciplines (at least in interdisciplinary studies) is the very strong emphasis he places on learning the skills of inquiry. Clearly he believes that these skills display significant common features across all the disciplines. Within each discipline, the recurrence of the central content in Bruner's spiral curriculum involves a form of vertical integration.

J.J. Schwab has discussed the general question of the structure of disciplines somewhat more systematically than Bruner.[12] In reference to the internal structure of a discipline (its most significant elements and the relationship between them), Schwab focuses on two broad and connected aspects: the substantive structure and the syntactical structure. The first consists in the pattern that the body of knowledge in a discipline takes because of the concepts, models etc. that it employs. There may be more than one conceptual scheme operating in a discipline at any given time (e.g. that of psychoanalysis and behaviourism in psychology); if so, the discipline will exhibit as many substantive structures as there are conceptual schemes. The syntactical structure consists in the rules and procedures followed by each discipline in developing and testing knowledge claims. Differences in the conceptual schemes between or within disciplines will be reflected in the details of their syntactical structures.

Schwab also discusses the question of structure among the disciplines. Although he critically assesses various historically significant schema, he does not commit himself on a list of disciplines and their pattern of relationship. The conclusion he seems to come to is that, while there are both logical and arbitrary ways of organizing the disciplines, there is no one correct logical order.

Theorists who have focused on the structure of disciplines in curriculum theory have generally tended to argue for the distinctiveness of each discipline rather than for features of similarity. If their claim about the internal structure of each discipline is correct, it suggests that the only defensible integration would take the form of multidisciplinary studies. Certainly the claim would provide a crucial guide to where integration may or may not occur without a distortion of understanding.

Logically Distinct Areas of Knowledge or Meaning: Cassirer, Phenix, Hirst

Among modified pluralists who have a direct interest in curriculum theory, the positions taken by Philip Phenix and Paul Hirst are probably the most fully developed and influential. Before considering their views, I should refer briefly to the work of Ernst Cassirer.[13] While it is not directly concerned with the design of the curriculum, it is clearly relevant to the question, and has in fact influenced curriculum theorists. He claims that in the present century the proliferation of knowledge, particularly in the absence of any pre-eminent discipline, has led to the loss of a coherent view of man. The clue to restoring such a view, he suggests, lies in recognizing that man's distinctive character and potentiality is as a symbol-using animal. Human beings as such do not, and cannot, inhabit a merely physical world; their various symbolic systems enter inextricably into all their experience. Cassirer distinguishes five main symbolic forms in human culture: myth and religion, language, art, history, and science. He emphasizes a fundamental difference between the discursive logic of science and the non-discursive logic of the other forms. However, in contrast to the logical positivists, he insists that the non-discursive is just as valid a cognitive mode as the discursive, that science, no less than myth or art, reflects man's capacity for constructing symbols through which he can organize aspects of his experience into a pattern of meaning. In relation to the question of curriculum integration, Cassirer's distinction seems to provide a basic link between the various symbolic forms that display non-discursive logic while imposing a solid barrier between them and science. However it is perhaps more relevant to notice that for Cassirer each of the symbolic forms constitutes a strictly incommensurable structure of meaning. Cassirer speaks of their unity in terms of a common function: they express in different ways and with varying emphasis the ceaseless struggle in human life between tradition and innovation. He also claims that human culture as a whole is characterized by a progressive movement towards man's self-liberation and that each symbolic form contributes in its own way to this development.

Even if one were convinced that Cassirer's account of the unity of symbolic forms was satisfactory, it would be difficult to translate it into an effective principle for the integration of the curriculum as a whole. However Cassirer's theory has bearing on the question of curriculum integration in several important respects: it emphasizes that full human development depends on acquiring a range of symbolic forms; it also emphasizes that man's symbolizing activity is by no means restricted to disciplines of knowledge; it suggests the possibility of containing in a non-arbitrary way the vast diversity of man's symbolizing activity within a relatively few general forms.

Phenix's theory clearly reflects Cassirer's attention to distinct contexts of meaning and his location of man's defining characteristic in symbol using.[14] The theory also bears the strong influence of the 'structures' approach. However Phenix attempts to carry the inquiry beyond the internal structure of individual disciplines to an examination of the pattern of relationships that exists among all the systematic modes of thought. In regard to the preoccupation with the structure of individual disciplines, Phenix warns of two dangers: that it would end up being a return to the traditional subject-matter curriculum, and that it would give a too narrow, purely intellectualistic interpretation of knowledge. Against the first, he claims that a discipline's structure should be attended to in education as a means of making the most economical use of each person's capacity for learning. Against the second, he stresses the variety and range in the types of meaning.

The fundamental principle in his argument is that 'human beings are essentially creatures who have the power to experience meanings. Distinctively human existence consists in a pattern of meanings'.[15] General education is the process of engendering essential meanings. It is the education of persons in their essential humanness. In Phenix's view, meaning in human life is at present threatened by four main forces: the spirit of scepticism, extreme specialization, the vast mass of cultural products, and the rapid rate of change in the conditions of life. Since the curriculum is directly concerned with meanings, it needs to be constructed as a counter to these forces. It is most likely to succeed in this objective if it ensures that all the most fundamental distinctive forms of meaning are included in the process of education.

Phenix identifies six areas of meaning in human experience—symbolics (communication): language, mathematics, art; empirics (scientific knowledge): physical, social sciences; aesthetics: literature, art, music; synnoetics (personal knowledge): literature, philosophy, history, psychology, theology; ethics (moral knowledge); synoptics (integration): history, religion, philosophy. Within each realm, one can distinguish typical methods, leading ideas, and characteristic structures. Every expression of meaning, according to Phenix, can be classified in relation to three dimensions of quantity (singular, general, comprehensive) and three dimensions of quality (fact, form, norm). The realms of meaning exhibit various combinations of these dimensions of quantity and quality in their characteristic expressions. These differences form the main basis for Phenix's classification.

In working the realms of meaning into a curriculum, Phenix proposes three basic principles.

(i) The scope of content should be such as to ensure that the six realms of meaning are included.

(ii) While all the realms of meaning should be represented to some extent throughout the period of general education, there is a logical hierarchical order among them. Symbolics needs to be stressed in the earlier stages, while synoptics presupposes a substantial grasp of meanings.

(iii) Content should be chosen only from fields of disciplined inquiry; it should focus on the key ideas and principles and be chosen for its capacity to exemplify the methods of inquiry and to arouse imagination.

At many points in *Realms of Meaning,* Phenix stresses the importance of integration both in the aspects of a person's life and in the elements of an educational program. Early in the book he argues that 'because a person is an organized totality and not just a collection of separate parts, the curriculum ought to have a corresponding organic quality'.[16]

It is also clear that he treats the integral character of a person's life as an ideal to be realized, and one that can be promoted or obstructed depending on whether one acquires the modes of meaning in a related or fragmented way. Phenix's scheme builds in various levels of curriculum integration. Although the criteria for identifying a realm of meaning vary somewhat in his list, Phenix believes there are significant common logical grounds on which the areas of disciplined inquiry within each realm can be interrelated.

In Phenix's scheme, the main integrating links between realms of meaning are provided by the disciplines of the symbolic and synoptic domains. The former play an obvious part in every other domain. The latter offer vantage points from which the disciplines of the various domains can be seen together: 'history by imaginatively recreating the past, religion by the disclosure of ultimate meanings, and philosophy by the critical interpretation of expressed meanings'.[17] There are also several disciplines that belong to more than one realm of meaning in Phenix's classification.

Phenix is not advocating, however, that the distinct structure of each discipline should be lost sight of in being studied as part of a realm of meaning. The latter does not form a unique field of inquiry in which the contributing disciplines are absorbed. Phenix acknowledges that he groups disciplines in a given realm of meaning according to their 'dominant logical pattern'; there may be other logical respects in which disciplines from different realms overlap. The collaboration of disciplines across the borders of different realms of meaning is thus not proscribed, although the logical base is less extensive than for disciplines from within the same realm. What Phenix stresses is that, in cross-disciplinary studies, there should be some reasonable principle of organization in order to offset the danger of 'shallow nondisciplined thinking because of the mixture of methods and concepts involved'.[18] He also points out that each discipline, when properly understood, forms an integrated system for experience.

As in Phenix's case, Hirst's interpretation of the unity and diversity of knowledge forms an integral part of a theory of education. The broad sweep of his argument may be summarized in the following way.[19]

The range and quality of human experience depend on the development of mind. Although individuals possess innate capacities for its development, mind is acquired only through the process of learning the concepts and modes of thought that exist as public cultural traditions.

Such concepts and modes of thought are not the furnishing of the mind, but the constituents of mind itself and thus of what shapes us as distinctively human beings. If there is any significant range of concepts or any mode of thought of which we are ignorant, to that extent our capacity for experience is limited and we are deficient as rational human beings.

According to Hirst, there are in fact several related but fundamentally distinct forms of knowledge. They are distinguished on the basis of the following criteria: key concepts; logical conditions affecting the way these and other related concepts can be meaningfully used; ways of testing the truth of claims against experience; procedures, skills, and techniques for exploring experience. On the basis of these criteria, Hirst identifies the following distinct forms of knowledge: formal logic and mathematics; the physical sciences; knowledge of persons; moral judgment and awareness; aesthetic experience; religious beliefs; philosophical understanding.[20] The number of forms of knowledge is not fixed by some necessity in the nature of things and may change in the future. The forms of knowledge do not make up any hierarchical order; they are separate but equal.

The practice of education, Hirst argues, is concerned primarily with the development of mind or rational understanding. Since this development occurs to the extent that people acquire the forms of knowledge, the criteria for engaging effectively in each must also be the criteria against which the outcomes of the educational process are to be judged. Although the forms of knowledge need not exist as separate subjects in the curriculum, any curriculum that ignores what is logically and epistemologically distinctive of each form will inevitably, to that extent, fail to achieve the basic educational objective.

In Hirst's view, disciplines cannot be integrated in a strict sense unless their methods of inquiry and verification are logically of the same kind. This means that such integration is possible only within the same form of knowledge. At the same time, Hirst acknowledges the possibility of other less thorough forms of integration: what he refers to as 'fields of study' in which disciplines from various forms of knowledge are related by virtue of a common object of study (e.g. geography, engineering). The adequate treatment of complex practical and moral problems also depends on understanding the interrelationship between different forms of knowledge. What Hirst emphasizes, however, is that in acquiring knowledge with understanding we have as much need to learn how to discriminate between different forms as to see their interrelatedness. A serious danger he sees in the use of complex curriculum units involving more than one form of knowledge is that the effort to link fundamentally different concepts, theories, modes of inquiry, and so on distracts attention from the connections within a single form, on which an adequate understanding of new concepts etc. depends.

Knowledge and its Organization as an Instrument of Social Control: Young, Bourdieu

Sociologists of knowledge have recently made a number of important claims about the nature of an integrated curriculum. In the present context I wish to draw attention to only one issue. My own assumption as well as that of the theorists whose views I have been outlining is that claims about the logical and epistemological characteristics affecting the organization of knowledge can be objective, and that there can be genuine argument about the truth or adequacy of such claims. Some sociologists of knowledge interested in the design of curriculum have rejected this assumption. M.F.D. Young is a well-known exponent of this position.[21] As I mentioned earlier, not only does he argue that the selection and organization of knowledge in the curriculum reflect the preferences of the social groups who exercise power in the society, but he makes the much stronger claim that there is no body of objective knowledge at all. What we believe, what we mean by 'true', 'false', 'rational' and other epistemological concepts shifts according to the perspective of the social group to which we belong. Arguments about whether knowledge should be organized for teaching and learning into a number of separate units or presented as an integrated whole depend ultimately, he claims, on what is valued as knowledge from one social group to another. In Young's analysis, the subject-centred curriculum helps to maintain the power and control of social groups whose values he dislikes. He would prefer a different pattern of social control; and because he believes it would be promoted through an open integrated organization of knowledge, this is the kind of curriculum he advocates. Presumably he also wants what is to count as knowledge to be settled by appeal to different criteria. The basic argument (if there can be one) is now not directly epistemological, but is about conflicting social and political values. The terms of the conflict are starkly drawn: elitism, competition, capitalism versus egalitarianism, co-operation, socialism.

Others who take a sociology of knowledge approach to the study of schooling and the curriculum do not necessarily share quite the same position as Young. Pierre Bourdieu, for instance, seems to be less uncompromising on the question of relativism.[22] In identifying the beliefs, values, etc. that form what he calls a cultural 'arbitrary' (that is whose claim to objectivity is limited to the conditions of a particular group at a given time), he acknowledges that there are some universally true principles about the world and human nature. Cultural content is arbitrary when it cannot be deduced from such principles. At the same time, Bourdieu devotes considerable attention to the elaboration of the principle that the ruling ideas are the ideas of the ruling class. In his view, the organization of the school and the curriculum serve, for the most part, to impose a cultural arbitrary–the beliefs, values, interests of the groups who hold power in the society.

Critique of the Relativist Basis for Integrated Studies

In attempting to assess the diverse positions that have been reviewed, I shall first comment briefly on the radical rejection of objectivity in knowledge by Young and some other sociologists of curriculum. I should make two preliminary notes. First, objectivity is not to be confused with certainty or infallibility. It is linked directly with the notion of rational and responsible belief: the condition that a claim be subject to checks that are independent of the believer. Secondly, objectivity is compatible with the condition that human efforts to achieve knowledge are relative to historical and social contexts. Such relativity does not entail relativism, as sociologists of knowledge have often supposed. The whole issue of objective knowledge is a large and complex one, and I shall not do more than suggest the direction of several of the arguments against the kind of relativism that Young supports and in favour of objectivity.

(i) The relativist position is open to a fundamental logical objection, namely, that it cannot be asserted without making the non-relativist claim that all knowledge is relativistic. If a relativist seeks to escape from this dilemma, he has to admit that any view he expresses is 'situationally specific' and has no claim to truth beyond that context. Young himself, in the introduction to *Knowledge and Control,* makes claims that depend on the possibility of comparing different culturally determined ways of thinking. He then inconsistently concludes that we are locked into one of these ways of thinking and that it is impossible, in principle, to show that one set of cognitive categories is better for explaining certain phenomena than another.

(ii) There is a large amount of common-sense knowledge (e.g. of middle-range objects of perceptual experience) that is essentially the same for human beings regardless of their social or cultural group. Human languages also possess important common features; whatever one's native language, it thus involves certain ways of thinking about the world that are shared by all language users.[23] Many of the fundamental problems that the members of one social or cultural group try to solve are faced, in some form or other, by human beings everywhere.[24] These similarities among human beings are hardly surprising given that they share a common evolutionary background, that their physical characteristics and needs are essentially the same, and that their natural environments present so many common conditions for survival.

(iii) Conceptual schemes, including those devised in the course of systematic inquiry, do not exist as completely closed systems; they overlap with other systems and with the non-systematic experience of common sense. Moreover, as stressed earlier, they usually do not possess a fully coherent logical structure. It is by mistakenly treating each conceptual scheme (paradigm etc.) as though it were a completely coherent and autonomous system that relativists tend to confuse claims about the contextual character or relativity of meaning with the relativity of judgment (i.e. of the truth or rational justification of a claim in the language of a given conceptual scheme), and to assume that if meanings are relative to conceptual schemes (or languages) they cannot be shared by different schemes (or languages). Not only do accurate translations occur between different conceptual schemes and languages, but even metatheories and ideologies–assuming they make serious claims to knowledge–can be judged in the long run against facts of experience that are not themselves systematically determined by these theories or ideologies.[25]

Because of the common problems that confront them, human beings in quite different social and cultural contexts are often trying to achieve the same objectives of understanding. Where the similarity of problems and objectives is established, the rational quality of different procedures and conclusions can be assessed. The standpoint of objectivity recognizes that rational inquiry is subject to the test of human experience everywhere.[26]

In his comments on the practice of education, Young clearly shows his misunderstanding of the nature of objectivity in knowledge. He says, for example:

> By depending on or searching for external criteria outside of what we do, we avoid the experiential truth of still having to choose, of unavoidably being engaged with others in a common history.[27]

But there is no reason why an appeal to objective criteria (i.e. criteria independent of a particular individual or social group) should isolate human beings from one another, or reject experience, or make people less responsible. On the contrary, by recognizing objective criteria, we take responsibility for testing the rationality of our beliefs against the experience of the widest possible human community. Young also claims that, by presenting knowledge as objective, teachers become mere instruments of the *status quo*. But it is only if knowledge claims are not essentially matters of political power that teachers have some independent ground for arguing about the *status quo*. If Young is consistent, he must say that change in education is always to be interpreted fundamentally in terms of political struggle; regardless of what group succeeds in the struggle, teachers must inevitably, on Young's theory, be mere instruments of the *status quo*.

I do not wish to imply that sociologists of knowledge cannot speak significantly to educational issues. On the particular question of integrated studies, it is important to know what ways of organizing the quest for knowledge—whether by dividing or unifying—merely reflect group interests; how the selection and arrangement of knowledge in a curriculum relate to group interests and to what extent they are determined solely by such interests; what social factors influence the relative value placed on different kinds of knowledge in a society.[28] These and similar issues are directly relevant to decisions on what can and ought to be done about the integration of knowledge in the curriculum. But their point depends on our being able to distinguish what counts as knowledge by criteria that do not themselves reflect political or social interests. Without this possibility, the sociologists' own findings would have to be regarded as yet another move in the power game.

The Nature of Disciplines

I turn now to the spectrum of views represented by the other theorists I have discussed. My main purpose is to determine, as far as possible, what may justifiably be claimed about integrated studies from the viewpoint of the logical and epistemological conditions that affect the organization of knowledge.

Stephen Toulmin emphasizes a distinction that has an important bearing on this task.[29] He points out that, in the conduct of inquiry, the conditions for a claim or procedure to be rational are not to be confused with those for a logical system of concepts and propositions. The tendency to identify 'rational' with 'logical' is encouraged by treating disciplines as systems of concepts, theories, and methods of inquiry in isolation from any historical and institutional context. Attention comes to be concentrated on the finished products of inquiry, assessed in the light of various models of logical coherence, rather than on the much more complex continual interaction of process and outcome that characterizes the practice of a discipline.

Of the theories to which I have referred, logical positivism provides the most extreme example of this approach. In varying degrees, Hirst, Phenix, and the exponents of structure within disciplines also tend to be preoccupied with the conditions of logically systematic organization in knowledge. Dewey is an exception in his attempt to examine the logic of the process by which problems are explored and solved. His theory is flawed, however, by the assumption that all efforts of intelligence are problem solving and that all problem solving involves essentially the same process. The sociologists of knowledge do highlight the historical and institutional aspects of disciplines. However, as I have argued, in treating knowledge and its organization as merely an instrument of varying group interests, they destroy any impartial basis for rational judgment.

In order to identify what fundamentally distinguishes disciplines, it is necessary to see them as historically evolving collective enterprises that are institutionally organized. A discipline arises as a sustained and systematic effort to examine a certain range of questions and problems of common human significance. In order to fulfil its purpose, those who engage in the advancement of a discipline need to develop a sufficient institutional form to enable findings and procedures to be communicated and assessed by others, to provide for an effective cumulative development from one generation to the next, and to induct new practitioners. The crucial factors that distinguish one discipline from another are the set of questions and problems to which the practitioners address themselves and the specific common aims they accept. The latter help to determine both the distinctive issues and the criteria by which they are judged to be effectively treated. Nothing is set once and for all. Over time, disciplines may combine or cease, and new ones emerge. Within a discipline, there is relatively frequent innovation and revision in concepts and theories, the methods and techniques also change—although less frequently, and even the basic objectives are subject to revision.

Against this background, several general points can be made that have particular relevance for the question of integration in the curriculum.

(i) It cannot justifiably be claimed of any discipline, even within the physical sciences, that all the important concepts and theories fit together in a single logical system. While some concepts and theories in a discipline may form a strictly logical system, there are always others that are independent of the system or at variance with it. In some disciplines (e.g. psychology, linguistics), to the extent that concepts do form a logical network, there are several rival groups—such as the behaviourists and Gestalt theorists in psychology and the transformationalists and functionalists in linguistics. In a number of disciplines (such as history, literary criticism) there is no clear logical pattern of distinctive concepts at all.[30]

It follows that, in relation to what Schwab calls the 'substantive structure', the advice to teach the structure of a discipline cannot be implemented without serious qualifications. This is not to deny that every discipline has some concepts that play a more significant role than others in fulfilling its purposes and that there are various logical connections among them. However, if they are to be given prominence in pedagogy, it is because they play this role, not because they constitute a distinct logical structure.

It also follows that, if the main concepts and theories of an individual discipline do not form a unified logical system, such a system cannot be a defining characteristic of a more inclusive form of knowledge or realm of meaning to which several disciplines belong. Hence, for the question of integrated studies, logical structure in the concepts and theories of a discipline presents no rigid barrier to relating them to those of other disciplines or applying them in various contexts; on the other hand, neither does it provide a firm basis for integrating a number of disciplines in a single form of knowledge.

(ii) There are, no doubt, general features of rational inquiry that every discipline employs. These might be abstracted and studied as a separate subject comparable to logic. However, what matters in the practice of a discipline is how these are employed in the context of its distinctive concepts, models, techniques, aims. At a somewhat lower level of generality, common features of method do provide a reasonable and useful basis for relating disciplines. It is obvious that from this point of view physics, chemistry, and biology have more in common than anthropology and sociology, and that these latter have more in common than, say, literary criticism and theory of art.

Perhaps the critical determinant for relating and distinguishing disciplines on the basis of methods are the epistemologically different objectives that disciplines pursue. There are significant differences of method depending on whether a discipline is primarily trying to explain and predict through laws or well-founded causal generalizations, to explain actions and events by making them intelligible in terms of human reasons and motives (as happens in the writing of history), to interpret meaning (e.g. religion, philosophy, literary criticism), to evaluate, to prescribe. A discipline may include more than one of these objectives, but where one predominates, as it often does, it is reflected in the kinds of method employed, the evidence counted as relevant, and the logical character of concepts and claims.[31] While the epistemic objectives of a discipline do not settle the question of whether or to what extent it may be integrated with another discipline, they are significant factors that must be taken into account in co-ordinating or drawing on several disciplines in a curriculum unit. Although the risk of distortion and misunderstanding is usually greater in relating disciplines with different general epistemic objectives (e.g. biology and ethics), there may also be serious traps when these objectives are broadly the same (e.g. the evaluation of art and of moral conduct).

(iii) In the advancement of a discipline—the criticism and development of its ideas, theories, interpretations, methods, and even its basic aims—the fundamental question is what may rationally be accepted. Whether existing theories are sustained or innovations adopted is a matter of critical rational judgment. While there are general criteria of rationality, what counts as a rational decision in regard to this or that concept or theory depends on the specific criteria for reason giving that are bound up with each discipline's distinctive range of problems and aims and with the procedures it has devised for this process to be engaged in by its members. While details of method may be common to various disciplines, the conditions for rational inquiry and belief within a discipline depend on the whole repertoire of methods, aims, and institutional arrangements for debate by which it is characterized. The differences of detail in the criteria and methods of rational inquiry are one of the fundamental grounds on which disciplines are distinguished from one another and need to be treated independently. Thus, while the conditions for rational inquiry do not prevent collaboration between disciplines, they severely limit the degree to which elements from different disciplines can be combined in more inclusive units.

(iv) In so far as disciplines play any serious part in education, two important consequences for the treatment of methods of inquiry follow from the previous points: (a) the whole curriculum or even significant areas of it cannot without distortion be integrated on the basis of common methods or techniques of inquiry; and (b) the policy of stressing methods of inquiry (even within a single discipline) to the neglect of content and the historical institutional character of disciplines is just as defective as the traditional practice of presenting content as timeless truth divorced from the processes by which it is constructed.

The detailed criteria and procedures for rational inquiry in a discipline are shaped by its substantive concepts and questions. We cannot effectively learn the one without the other. As we saw, Schwab correctly stresses this relationship. Bruner, on the other hand, at least tends to overplay the common features in the disciplined processes of inquiry and (partly as a consequence) to treat these processes as though they had an autonomous existence in relation to content. It needs to be stressed that, even when the place of both content and method is duly recognized, disciplines cannot be properly understood unless their historical and institutional aspects are also appreciated.

(v) It is true that common-sense knowledge (and perhaps what Oakeshott refers to as the concrete whole of experience) provides a thread of connection among all the systematic forms of thought. The implicit understanding of reality that we acquire in learning ordinary language and using it in the context of the practices that make up everyday life—e.g. notions of causality, time, space, substance; the awareness of self-identity and the knowledge of other persons—enters crucially into the work of disciplines. However it does not follow that common-sense knowledge provides a ready-made integrating principle whose fuller development would be the fundamental purpose of education. The common-sense knowledge we bring to the process of education is undifferentiated rather than integrated. It is largely unreflective and often contains inconsistency within the same area of belief and practice. Although disciplined knowledge draws on common-sense knowledge, it is not simply an extension of it. Disciplines may refine, reform, be at odds with, or be largely independent of our common-sense knowledge.

If a fully integrated common-sense and concrete experience is proposed as an ideal to be achieved, the question is whether such an ideal is possible. Whatever coherent pattern of relationships may exist among things at the most fundamental levels of being, our knowledge and experience does not form a single coherent logical system, and there are good reasons to believe that it cannot. In human experience there are, for example, equally admirable but not entirely compatible ideals: such as the purposes of art and morality, the claims of the contemplative and the active modes of life, the rights of the individual and the community, the ideals of freedom and equality. The attempt to impose an artificial unity only distorts our understanding. We can deal rationally with the diverse aspects of human experience without falsely assuming that they must fit together on the model of a perfectly logical system.

The Consequences for Integrated Studies in a Curriculum of Liberal Education

Given what I have claimed about the nature of disciplines in the foregoing points, what conclusions follow for the question of integrated studies in the secondary-school curriculum? As I noted earlier, the precise answer depends on how the nature of education and the role of the school are interpreted. At the beginning of the chapter, I indicated my support for the view that the distinctive role of the secondary school is to develop an understanding of the critical and reflective domains of culture and the major social institutions. This means that predominantly, if not entirely, the curriculum of the secondary school should be one of liberal education. I shall not attempt to defend this view in detail. What I would summarily argue is that, if the human right to education amounts to anything substantial, it means that everyone has the right to be given an adequate opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skill for understanding the main institutions in which human beings live and for responding inteliigently to the main critical and reflective modes of culture.[32] This kind of knowledge and skill does not come spontaneously; it depends on a systematic, sustained, and guided effort for which the institution of the school is uniquely suited. Other modes of culture can be effectively acquired simply through participating in the general life of the society, many interests that adolescents have are also best satisfied in this way, and vocational skills are most appropriately learnt in apprenticeships on the job.

As we saw, Hirst and Phenix make the case for a broad liberal education on the ground that there is a direct relationship between the development of mind and the acquisition of the forms of knowledge. I think this argument (certainly as Hirst presents it) overstates the case. It is obvious that through all kinds of everyday experience and what we call common-sense knowledge there is a substantial development of mind. In the domain of morality, for example, many people make sound judgments and act well without any study of ethical theory. However I think the program of liberal education can be defended on the following grounds. First, because human beings are capable of realizing ideals of rational action, it is desirable that they should learn to engage in significant practices, such as morality, in a critical, reflective way rather than simply as a matter of tradition. (Traditions of practice are important, but knowing how to follow and adapt them intelligently should not be the prerogative of an elite.) Secondly, although human beings can develop the quality of their lives through a vast variety of experiences that do not require a liberal education, it is obviously an advantage if they are able to interpret the world from the perspectives given by the systematic efforts at critical understanding that make up the disciplines. Not only do these perspectives affect the quality of what we can otherwise experience, but they equip us conceptually to think and feel and act in new ways.

Among the criteria for a program in liberal education, there are two that should be stressed in relation to the question of integrated studies. First, although liberal education may include specialization, it is fundamentally concerned with the acquisition of a broad range of knowledge and with an understanding of the relative strengths and limitations of different modes of thought. Secondly, in liberal education, the systematic bodies of knowledge and methods of inquiry are studied mainly for the sake of developing a framework of understanding and interpretation in relation to the full scope of one's life as a human being. Although this objective involves entering, to some extent, into the point of view of the physicist, historian and so on, liberal education should not be confused with professional training for these fields.

I argued earlier that disciplines cannot be grouped into a relatively few logically distinct forms of knowledge (modes of experience, etc.). In the sense that Hirst uses the expression, there is not, for example, a distinct form of knowledge called science that one may acquire by learning one or two science disciplines. If Hirst were correct, his anatomy of knowledge into seven forms would provide the perfect blueprint for breadth in liberal education. The same could be said of Phenix's six realms of meaning. However it is clear from even a superficial inspection that the candidates in Phenix's list are not all logically basic and irreducible, and that the placing of disciplines in particular realms of meaning is ambiguous.[33]

While disciplines are not reducible to a few logically discrete general forms, the several distinct epistemic objectives provide one dimension of breadth that arises from the nature of the disciplines. The range of disciplines in a program of liberal education should be such as to include all the main epistemic objectives. There is no one right content or form of organization for liberal education. If we reject assumptions about the logical reduction of disciplines, I think the various groupings distinguished by Hirst, Phenix, Oakeshott, and Cassirer can be interpreted as more or less adequate ground plans for a curriculum that includes the major epistemic objectives.[34] Keeping in mind the two criteria mentioned above, my own suggestion for the broad scope of a curriculum in liberal education would be as follows:

the basic symbolic skills of language, logic, and mathematics;

a selection of disciplines and multidisciplinary studies that seek to explain the physical world through the discovery of general causal principles (e.g. physics, chemistry, biology);

a selection of disciplinary and multidisciplinary studies that seek to understand man as a cultural and social being by reference both to physical causes and to reasons, purposes and motives for action (e.g. history, geography, social psychology);

the major interpretative, expressive, and normative forms of culture and their disciplined study: religion, literature and the other arts, morality (and the comparative cultural study involved in learning an ancient or contemporary foreign language);

a study of several complex social problems that lie outside the scope of disciplines, but to the understanding and solution of which disciplines can contribute (e.g. poverty, international peace, urban planning, energy resources).

Liberal education in any interpretation draws heavily on the intellectual disciplines. Hence the kinds of integrated studies that can be undertaken in a curriculum of liberal education depend largely on what is possible in the nature of the disciplines. Following from the earlier comments on disciplines, I believe there are several conclusions to be drawn about the scope that is possible for integration.

(i) It needs to be stressed that each discipline is itself an integrating system. Through its conceptual schemes and methods of inquiry, it enables us to draw the vast number of details that make up some significant part of experience into a more or less coherent intelligible pattern. Disciplines are continually trying to improve the integrating power of their theories.

(ii) Integration between disciplines in a strong sense–i.e. where they are absorbed in relation to a new set of guiding objectives, where their concepts and methods of inquiry are modified and supplemented by new ones–can occur in practice only through the work of those who are engaged systematically in the advancement of a discipline. The practical test of success in the attempt at this kind of integration is whether the new way of organizing knowledge attracts a community of scholars and acquires an appropriate institutional form.[35] The school may include in its curriculum new disciplines that emerge through the fusion of existing disciplines. But such integration is not the kind that most teachers in a secondary school are equipped to initiate and certainly they would not be justified in attempting it in the course of introducing students to the existing state of disciplined inquiry.[36]

(iii) The integration of disciplines in multidisciplinary fields of study is a common feature of the organization of knowledge (e.g. geography, engineering, and the investigation of basic social institutions such as education, law, government, the economy). Some of these fields develop characteristics of a distinct discipline because, although the contributing disciplines retain much of their identity, they are linked through a number of problems, concepts, methods, and objectives distinctive to the field. In regard to these cases, the position of the school is the same as for integrated studies in the strong sense. In other multidisciplinary studies, however, each discipline simply contributes its own perspective to a complex topic (e.g. Art and society in nineteenth century England, Latin-American studies). The perspective of one discipline may or may not predominate.[37] Here the school is free to exercise its own initiative in relating various disciplines.

(iv) Disciplines can be integrated in a weak sense when they are applied to the resolution of problems which because of their complexity or concreteness do not fall wholly within the scope of disciplines (e.g. many issues of public policy and social morality such as the question of supporting sanctions against another country for its violation of civil rights, whether an expressway should be built through a city, whether marijuana and similar drugs should be legalized). By contrast, the problems investigated in a multidisciplinary field of study are defined completely within the scope of the participating disciplines. I have suggested that the study of several complex human problems of the other kind should form part of a liberal education: both for the sake of gaining a better understanding of the particular problems and of learning how to relate and apply the perspectives of various disciplines in such cases.

In summary, the integration of disciplines in the curriculum can (a) reflect the forms of interrelationship that currently exist in the practice of the disciplines themselves or (b) be devised within the school either through the study of topics that can be approached from the perspectives of several disciplines or by attempting to explore the kind of macro-problems that can be illuminated but not resolved by the contribution of a number of disciplines.

There are obvious advantages to be gained from integrated studies: the understanding of many significant questions and practices that do not fit within the boundaries of any one discipline, a better appreciation of the nature of the contributing disciplines themselves, and the acquisition of skills in employing the interpretative frameworks that disciplines provide. There are also some serious difficulties. At least one of these relates directly to the points made earlier about the nature of disciplines. It is the danger of superficiality and distortion in attempting to draw on a discipline for certain concepts, findings, or methods when one has little, if any, systematic knowledge of the discipline. A person in this situation will have to employ ideas and findings without any grasp of the methods by which they have been tested or arrived at. The odds are overwhelming, I think, that he will end up with various scraps of information adrift from any context of critical understanding. The problem of superficiality and distortion grows with the number of disciplines that a person, working from the outside, tries to relate, especially when they involve basically different epistemic objectives. This problem can be alleviated through a carefully planned curriculum, but it is not one that should be underestimated.

I have been referring directly to liberal education, in which the disciplines play a crucial role. However I believe that the conditions for integrated studies determined by the nature of disciplines must apply, to a considerable extent, to any serious interpretation of secondary education. Formal education may begin with common-sense knowledge and the more or less spontaneous curiosity of the learner, but it is not justified in staying at this level. One of the fundamental points of schooling, particularly in adolescence, is to channel everyday experience and curiosity in the direction of critical, reflective thought and action. This cannot be done without introducing the learner to at least some of the disciplines of knowledge. The secondary-school curriculum may be constructed in relation to a large variety of human activities thought to be significant, and the whole disciplined quest for knowledge may be treated as simply one of these activities.[38] Even in this arrangement, if the school is to play a distinctive part in helping adolescents engage in all these worthwhile activities, it must stress the knowledge and skills needed for a critical reflective engagement, and it cannot do this without examining the activities from the perspectives of relevant disciplines. Perhaps the most appropriate broad pattern of development in the curriculum is a movement from relatively undifferentiated everyday knowledge into the specialized perspectives of a range of disciplines and, from these, to the study of complex human questions in which one's personal everyday experience and the contribution of various disciplines need to be related.

Notes and References

[1] See, for example, C.H. Rathbone, The implicit rationale of the open education classroom, In C.H. Rathbone (Ed.), *Open Education: The Informal Classroom.* New York: Citation Press, 1971. For a comment on the position defended by Rathbone, see Chapter 4 of this volume.

[2] M.F.D. Young, Knowledge and control; An approach to the study of curricula as socially organized knowledge, In M.F.D. Young (Ed.), *Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of Education.* London: Collier-Macmillan, 1971, 1-18; 19-46. The position taken by Pierre Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron is less clear *(Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture,* London: Sage Publications, 1977). They acknowledge principles and beliefs that are 'non-arbitrary' (i.e. non-relative). However they seem to treat most social and cultural beliefs as relative to a group (particularly when the group plays a politically dominant role). On the role of schools, they labour the point that every form of pedagogy involves (in their special terminology) 'symbolic violence' and 'arbitrariness'. There seems to be no solid ground on which we can distinguish between the pedagogical efforts of a Socrates and a Squeers.

[3] For a defence of this interpretation of the curriculum see J.R. Martin, The disciplines and the curriculum, In J.R. Martin (Ed.), *Readings in the Philosophy of Education: A Study of Curriculum*, Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1970.

[4] The doctrine of felt needs and interests might be plausible if it could be assumed that every child was born into a richly stimulating cultural environment. Apart from this difficulty, it leans heavily on an atomic individualist view of human beings that underplays the claims of communal needs and interests.

[5] It is only when a culture has developed systematic bodies of theory and methods of inquiry that its transmission comes to depend at least partly

on formal schooling. In the absence of such a development, the elements of a culture can be acquired through direct participation in the range of its practices; *a fortiori* for the practical skills of its social and economic life.

[6] See, for example, P.K. Feyerabend, Against method: outline of an anarchistic epistemology, In M. Rodner and S. Winokur (Eds), *Minnesota Studies in Philosophy of Science,* Vol.IV, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1970; T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* 2nd ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970. For further statements of their respective views and critical discussion, see I. Lakatos, and A. Musgrave (Eds), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

[7] M. Oakeshott, *Experience and its Modes,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1933; *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays,* London: Methuen & Co., 1962. (See The voice of poetry in the conversation of mankind.)

[8] Oakeshott has fairly recently written a number of essays on the nature of education. See, for example, Education: the engagement and its frustration, In R.F. Dearden, P.H. Hirst, R.S. Peters (Eds), *Education and the Development of Reason,* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972. Like Cassirer, to whom I shall refer shortly, Oakeshott in this essay emphasizes that human life in its distinctive character is lived in a world of meanings, not of mere things. These meanings are not innate or acquired simply through maturation. They come only through learning. Thus he interprets education as the deliberate process of entering actively into 'the inheritance of human understandings, modes of thinking, feeling and imagination' (p.24). There seems to be no echo of the earlier doctrine of 'the concrete whole of experience'. While he does not refer in detail to the curriculum, he clearly emphasizes a plurality of modes of understanding and meaning. In practice at least, therefore, his position on the question of an integrated curriculum would seem to be similar to Hirst's (see below).

[9] J. Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry,* New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1938; *Democracy and Education,* New York: Macmillan, 1916, especially Chs XI–XIV.

[10] J. Bruner, *The Process of Education,* New York: Vintage Books, 1960.

[11] Bruner identifies three fundamental ways in which experience can be represented: through action (the enactive mode); through perceptual organization and imagery (the iconic mode); and through symbols (the symbolic mode). He claims that in the development of human beings from infancy to adulthood, the enactive mode is first dominant, then the iconic, and finally the symbolic. However he emphasizes that each mode may play a part even in mature intellectual activity. See J. Bruner, *Towards a Theory of Instruction,* New York: W.W. Norton, 1968, pp.10–12, 27–28.

[12] J.J. Schwab, Structure of the disciplines: meanings and significances, In G.W. Ford and L. Pugno (Eds), *The Structure of Knowledge and the Curriculum.* Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964; Problems, topics, and issues, In S. Elam (Ed.), *Education and the Structure of Knowledge,* Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964.

[13] E. Cassirer, *An Essay on Man*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944; *The Logic of the Humanities*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960. For the influence of Cassirer on curriculum theorists see, for example, P. Phenix, *Realms of Meaning*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964; A.R. King, and J.A. Brownell, *The Curriculum and the Disciplines of Knowledge*, New York: Wiley, 1966.

[14] Phenix, op.cit. See also P. Phenix, The architectonics of knowledge, In Elam, op.cit.

[15] Phenix, 1964, p.5.

[16] ibid., p.4.

[17] ibid., p.235.

[18] ibid., p.319.

[19] P.H. Hirst, *Knowledge and the Curriculum*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974.

[20] There have been some modifications to Hirst's list since it was first proposed in Liberal education and the nature of knowledge (first published in 1965 and reproduced in Hirst, op.cit.). The list given in the text is from P.H. Hirst and R.S. Peters, *The Logic of Education*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, pp.63–64. The main difference is that history has been replaced in the list by 'knowledge of persons'.

[21] Young, op.cit.

[22] P. Bourdieu, and J.C. Passeron, op.cit. See comment in note 2 above. On the specific question of integration in the curriculum, it is interesting to compare Basil Bernstein's position [Young op.cit., Ch.2] with Young's. Although Bernstein interprets the social significance of integrated curricula in much the same way, his endorsement is somewhat less partisan. He points out, for example, several demanding conditions that have to be satisfied if chaos is to be avoided. Among them is the need for a high level of ideological agreement among members of a staff. Bernstein also suggests a number of consequences that at least some supporters of integrated curricula would not find desirable. With the breakdown between educational and everyday knowledge in an integrated curriculum, a much larger area of a pupil's life is subject to the socializing influence of the school. He also claims that integrated curricula, because of their less specialized outputs, tend to promote, in Durkheim's terminology, a mechanical rather than organic form of social solidarity. In assessing Bernstein's general prognosis, one has to remember that several of his characterizing differences between 'collection codes' and 'integrated codes' are not necessary features of one or other code. Thus, for example, there is nothing in the nature of the 'closed' type of curriculum that requires content to be emphasized rather than ways of knowing–or in the 'open' type to require the opposite emphasis.

[23] Despite the work of Chomsky and others, this may be a somewhat rash claim–given that there are between three and four thousand human languages, many of which have not been studied. However I think the claim holds for the languages that would account for a large majority of human beings. See G. Steiner, *Extraterritorial: Papers on Literature and the Language Revolution*, Harmondsworth, Mx: Penguin Books, 1975, 66–95.

[24] See S. Toulmin, *Human Understanding*, Vol.I, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972, p.485 seq.

[25] For the development of various views in this paragraph see, for example, A. Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, London: Hutchinson, 1976, Ch.4; I. Scheffler, *Science and Subjectivity*, New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967; A. Ryan, *The Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, London: Macmillan, 1970.

[26] Toulmin, op.cit., p.500.

[27] M.F.D. Young, Taking sides against the probable problem of relativism and commitment in teaching and sociology, *Educational Review*, 1973, **25** (3), p.220.

[28] In this respect, George Gurvitch's systematic examination of the way in which the main types of knowledge and modes of knowing are differently valued by various social groups and forms of society is worth consideration. To the extent that this kind of analysis is accurate, it at least gives educators a clear view of the interplay (and conflict) between politico-economic and epistemic values in the shaping of the curriculum. See G. Gurvitch, *The Social Frameworks of Knowledge*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971. The study of social factors (including particular education institutions) that influence the development of schools of thought within a discipline would also have obvious relevance for the design of a curriculum. On this point Pierre Bourdieu makes a number of interesting comments in Systems of education and systems of thought, In Young, op.cit.

[29] Toulmin, op.cit., pp.74–96, 128–134, 154. I am indebted to Toulmin for a number of the points made in this section.

[30] Toulmin (op.cit., p.378 seq.) makes a broad distinction between 'disciplinable' and 'non-disciplinable' activities. A discipline depends crucially on agreement to a fairly specific and realistic set of ideals in pursuing the common aim (e.g. of explaining the physical world). Activities that by their nature do not give rise to such ideals and the related common procedures are non-disciplinable. This is the case, for example, with activities that are preoccupied with personal ends or involve a multiplicity of values. Among 'disciplinable' activities, Toulmin distinguishes between 'compact' and 'diffuse' or 'would be' disciplines. The difference is a matter of degree depending largely on the extent to which the activities concerned allow for a clear set of agreed ideals and common procedures. In summary, Toulmin suggests that the division between disciplined and non-disciplined activities has taken its actual shape:

> because, in the course of their practical experience, men have discovered that it is both functionally possible and humanly desirable to isolate certain classes of issues, and make them the concern of specialized bodies of inquiries, while with issues of other kinds this turns out to be either impossible, or undesirable, or both at once. (Toulmin, op.cit., p.405)

[31] It should be stressed that the differences referred to here do not fit neatly with the division often made between the methods of the sciences and the humanities–a division sharply criticized by Karl Popper in *Objective Knowledge* (Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1972, pp.183–185). In so far as disciplines (whether in the sciences or the humanities) have the same epistemic

objectives, they will employ the same kinds of methods. However the important point is that these methods vary in their detailed employment from one discipline to another—both within the sciences and humanities as well as between them. Where the dominant epistemic objectives are different, one may speak only in very general terms of a common method. To vary Popper's example, the method of conjecture and refutation may be employed in critically assessing a poem as well as in constructing a theory of radioactivity. However, in these cases, apart from distinctive aspects of method, the common elements differ substantially in application.

[32] I have discussed this claim in detail in *Education and Social Ideals*, Toronto: Longman Canada, 1973, Ch.2. See also Equality and education, Chapter 10 in the present volume.

[33] Hirst gives a thorough criticism of Phenix's account of realms of meaning in *Knowledge and the Curriculum*, Ch.2. Various authors have challenged the details of Hirst's own theory (e.g. J. Gribble, Forms of Knowledge, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 1970, 2(1), 3-14). There have also been criticisms of the criteria on which his scheme is based (e.g. D.C. Phillips, The distinguishing features of forms of knowledge, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 1971, 3(2), 27-35).

[34] For examples of other defensible schemes, see H.S. Broudy, B.O. Smith, J.R. Burnett, *Democracy and Excellence in American Secondary Education*, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964, Ch.XV; D. Lawton, *Social Change, Educational Theory and Curriculum Planning*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1973, Ch.8.

[35] An important historical example was the integration and correction of Kepler's celestial physics and Galileo's terrestrial physics in Newtonian dynamics. It is possible that the discipline of physics will eventually absorb that of chemistry by providing in its principles and theories a full account of the findings of chemistry. Combined disciplinary studies such as social psychology or biochemistry illustrate a less dramatic form of integration among disciplines. They have not displaced or absorbed the disciplines they combine, but continue drawing on them as well as developing a distinctive range of theories and problems. The more dramatic integration could occur between psychology and sociology, but there are very strong reasons for doubting whether it is even possible that living organisms (and *a fortiori*, mental states and processes) could be adequately explained in purely physical terms.

[36] Basil Bernstein claims:

> in order to accomplish any form of integration (as distinct from different subjects focusing upon a common problem, which gives rise to what could be called a focused curriculum) there must be some relational idea, or supra-content concept, which focuses upon general principles at a high level of abstraction. (In Young, op.cit., p.60)

As an example of one such principle through which sociology and biology could be related, he suggests 'the issue of problems of order and change examined through the concepts of genetic and cultural codes'. Even though this degree of integration may not involve the absorption of one discipline by the other or their merger in a new discipline, it seems excessively optimistic to suppose that secondary-school teachers (or many university teachers for that matter) could effectively initiate it.

[37] Some complex topics are the objects of distinct disciplines as well as being studied from the perspectives of several other disciplines. Examples are language (linguistics), morality (ethics), literature (literary criticism). These distinct disciplines may to some extent draw on (and integrate) the work of other disciplines. However, in addition, a systematic multidisciplinary study could develop in relation to any of these topics. Presumably the distinct discipline in each case would provide the central concepts, theories, and problems in relation to which the contributing disciplines would be integrated.

[38] This proposal for the treatment of disciplines is made by Jane Martin (see note 3).

Chapter 6

Product or Process in Curriculum Evaluation?

Introduction

For a long time it has been supposed that the clear statement of objectives is a fundamental step in the sensible planning of a curriculum. It was rarely supposed, however, that one worked in ignorance of a tradition of educational practice and faced a blank page with the question of what should be one's educational objectives. Something like a pure rationalist approach of this kind was proposed several years ago by Ralph Tyler (in *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*, 1949). The first and fundamental step was to determine the objectives the school would try to attain. Then it was a matter of selecting the educational experiences likely to achieve the objectives, of organizing them efficiently for this purpose, and finally of assessing to what extent the objectives were being realized. In Tyler's scheme, the choice of objectives would reflect a combination of various perspectives: the needs and interests of the learner, the demands of contemporary social life, the uses of knowledge as seen by subject specialists, normative philosophy of school and society, psychology of learning. If one were to give full weight to these perspectives, it would perhaps not be possible to follow Tyler's scheme as a strictly linear model, with its sharply drawn distinction between educational ends and means. Whether or not Tyler intended his scheme to be interpreted in this way, this is the form in which it has exercised a significant influence on the theory and practice of curriculum development and evaluation during the past 25 years.

In his discussion of objectives, Tyler criticized the practice of stating them in terms of teaching activities and argued that, to be effective in the planning and evaluation of curriculum, they should be expressed as changes to be brought about in the behaviour of the learner. However it is clear that Tyler did not treat the notion of behaviour in the Skinnerian sense; that is, he did not attempt to eliminate reference to mental activities in the description of learning outcomes (critical thinking, for example, is exhibited in such behaviour as generalizing from a collection of specific facts, detecting logical fallacies in arguments). Tyler himself noted the theoretical and practical limitations on trying to define educational objectives in highly specific behavioural terms.[1]

The enthusiasm for behavioural objectives, which began to develop in the early 1960s, endorsed the linear model unreservedly, and carried the behavioural account of learning objectives to the extreme against which Tyler had warned. It was now often assumed that all educational objectives could be exhaustively described in terms of a learner's observable behaviour and that relatively complex patterns of such behaviour could be analysed into a cumulative sequence of more specific units which marked out the path for effective teaching and learning. In this scheme, teaching procedures and curriculum could be precisely evaluated by measuring the extent to which the pre-specified behavioural changes had occurred.

Over recent years the objectives approach to curriculum design and evaluation, particularly in its extreme behavioural form, has been subject to vigorous criticism.[2] In this chapter, I wish to examine the challenge made by Lawrence Stenhouse and a related group of curriculum evaluators to basic theoretical assumptions of the objectives approach and the alternative views of curriculum evaluation that they advocate. In the first part, I shall focus on Stenhouse's argument that the attention given to learning objectives is totally misdirected. In the second part, I shall examine the critique and alternative proposals of several closely related interpretations of curriculum evaluation (e.g. in the work of Barry MacDonald, Malcolm Parlett, and David Hamilton) which Stenhouse has endorsed. They not only support a different range of methods but challenge some important aspects of the methodology on which the objectives model is based.[3] The alternative model they have adopted has led them to interpret evaluation as a complex form of description. For the sake of a shorthand label, I shall refer to them for the time being as the process evaluators.

The discussion of the merits and limitations of these two positions will provide a suitable context for comments on several general issues concerning the nature and purpose of curriculum evaluation.

Stenhouse's Critique of the Objectives Model

The main criticism that Stenhouse makes of the objectives model, particularly as it relates to curriculum development, is that it seriously misunderstands the nature of knowledge.[4] Difficulties of measurement place limits on the application of the objectives model, but they are not the main ground for its rejection. Stenhouse grants that one may proceed well enough from desired learning outcomes when they consist in the performance of skills or the recall of information; that is, when the teacher's task is simply a matter of training or instructing. The appeal to learning outcomes does not work, however, when there is question of inducting someone into the public systems of thought that make up a culture. To the extent that teachers succeed in this central work of education, behavioural outcomes of students cannot be predicted. The essence of the enterprise is to promote originality. Behavioural objectives are not to be rejected because they place constraints on a priori freedom of choice that the learner is mistakenly presumed to possess, but because they obstruct the effort of genuine education to develop freedom and creativity.

Stenhouse refers briefly to various other ways in which he believes the preoccupation with objectives distorts induction into the forms of knowledge: it lowers standards of quality, tends to treat knowledge as merely instrumental, and stresses analysis whereas knowledge is more fundamentally concerned with synthesis.

The second general criticism suggested by Stenhouse is that, even if the objectives approach respected the nature of knowledge, it can offer no help for the improvement of practice. This leads Stenhouse to conclude that the only effective way in developing curriculum is to concentrate on the process.[5] Contrary to Tyler, he is convinced that curriculum can be devised, without reference to objectives, on the basis of content and how it should be presented. He appeals to R.S. Peters's argument that engagement in an educational activity does not need to be justified by reference to an end beyond itself, and to the distinction Peters makes between 'aims' and 'principles of procedure'. When people speak of an aim, they often refer to a principle for guiding action without having in mind any specific end state that the observance of the principle is to achieve.

Stenhouse's position may be constructed in the following way. Engagement in any of the public forms of knowledge that make up a culture is an obviously worthwhile activity. In analysing the general criteria of a worthwhile activity and in specifying the content and structure of a form of knowledge, we at the same time obtain principles of procedure for teaching. To take the illustration he gives in reference to *Man: A Course of Study:* the content calls for speculation on three basic questions about humanness through the study of social and behavioural science; the broad principles of procedure for the teacher in this course are those of 'a speculative behavioural and social scientist alive to the value issues raised by his work'.[6] In pedagogical terms, these procedural principles become translated into such guidelines as:

> to initiate and develop in youngsters a process of question-posing (the inquiry method);
> to help youngsters develop the ability to use a variety of first-hand sources as evidence from which to develop hypotheses and draw conclusions;
> to legitimize the search; that is, to give sanction and support to open-ended discussions where definitive answers to many questions are not found.[7]

Stenhouse is as much opposed to the use of learning objectives in the evaluation of a curriculum as in its development.[8] Although his criticisms are not very systematically worked out, several strands can be distinguished. In the first place, there is his interpretation of the fundamental point in talking about learning objectives and using them to evaluate curriculum. He sees them as a political device linked with the issue of public accountability. Their use in evaluation serves the interests of those who control centralized systems of education and wish to manipulate the shape of the curriculum.

In the second place, it quickly becomes clear that Stenhouse is not only opposed to the use of learning objectives for evaluation when they are specified and measured by a central authority, but even when the decisions are in the hands of teachers in an individual school. There seem to be two related reasons for his position. He argues in effect that the whole point and value of curriculum evaluation depends on its being an integral part of the complex process of planning and implementing a curriculum and of the effort to understand the process. In fact, the evaluation of any particular curriculum design should throw light on the working out of a general theory of curriculum innovation.

Stenhouse also raises a general methodological objection to the preoccupation with objectivity as it is reflected in the passion for precisely quantified assessment and thus for the specification of clearly observable and measurable learning objectives. The alternative methodology and techniques of curriculum evaluation to which he gives his support are those of the various writers I referred to earlier as the process evaluators.

Before turning to an examination of the main features of their approach, I wish to comment on Stenhouse's general view on the role of learning objectives in relation to curriculum design and evaluation.

An Assessment of Stenhouse's Position

Stenhouse correctly emphasizes a serious limitation of the learning objectives approach in so far as it attempts to pre-designate desired learning outcomes in terms of fairly specific changes in the learner's behaviour. There is no single way of acting that constitutes success in grasping the concepts and theories and modes of inquiry of a systematic form of knowledge; mastery will be exhibited by using them in ways that are imaginative and original, and thus unpredictable. In these conditions the linear model cannot work. However it does not follow, as Stenhouse believes it does, that learning outcomes expressed in behavioural terms have no place in the planning and evaluation of curriculum concerned with induction into forms of knowledge. When reference is made to learning objectives in behavioural terms, it is necessary to distinguish between two interpretations: one in which the behaviour (in observable sounds, movements, etc.) is said to constitute the learning outcome and one in which it is taken as evidence of the learning outcome.[9] The former view is part of the philosophical doctrine of behaviourism. One may reject this doctrine but still hold that, if we are justified in claiming that a person has succeeded in an effort to learn, there must be some observed change in a person's behaviour that is sufficient evidence of the learning that has occurred. Even when successful learning involves originality, the teacher must have some notion of what intervention on his part is likely to encourage this kind of learning outcome and of the criteria for recognizing significant originality in a student's work when it occurs. Otherwise there is not much sense in talking, as Stenhouse does, about promoting induction into systematic forms of knowledge through a process of teaching.

Stenhouse is inclined to exaggerate the degree and extent of originality as the criterion of successful learning in a form of knowledge. Apart from the many occasions on which there is a single correct response or procedure, there is often a relatively limited range of appropriate ways in which a question can be treated, which a competent and experienced teacher will know. The teacher's position may be somewhat analogous to that of a coach with a team practising for a game. As the circumstances of the game itself are unpredictable, there is no question of teaching the team precisely what to do in the game. But a good coach can anticipate the kinds of things his team needs to learn if their actual play is to be intelligent, adaptive, and so on.

As we have seen, Stenhouse concentrates his attack on the model of behavioural objectives in which a single correct response is assumed and in which the observable behaviour is treated as constituting the learning objective. I have pointed out why he is mistaken in concluding that, because this model does not fit the process of induction into systematic forms of knowledge, the planning and evaluating of this process does not depend on any reference at all to behavioural changes in the learner. Because Stenhouse does not examine the appeal to learning objectives in which specific behaviour or a range of behaviour is evidence of learning outcomes that include unobservable changes in mental states and dispositions, he not only underplays the role of learning objectives in teaching a form of knowledge but concedes too much to the behaviourist model in the teaching of skills and information. In so far as these form part of education, they should not be separated from understanding. Thus the adequate learning of skills and information does not consist simply in an observable performance, and usually the evidence of such learning is not given by one kind of observable performance. Stenhouse himself has some misgivings about the application of the behaviourist model to the learning of skills and information (skills may be subject to criteria of style and both skills and information 'are often learned in a context of knowledge').[10] But then he assumes that, if this model does not apply, there is no use in talking about learning objectives at all.

A related difficulty in Stenhouse's treatment of learning objectives is his failure to distinguish clearly between the essential weaknesses of the behaviourist interpretation and the practical misuse to which it or any other appeal to learning objectives might be put. Perhaps the behaviourist model unduly emphasizes analysis, but there is no reason why learning objectives should not respect the synthetic aspect of knowledge. Certainly it is not in the nature of learning objectives, behaviourist or otherwise, that standards of quality should be weakened or that knowledge should be treated in a purely instrumental way, or that political interests in accountability should be served rather than the improvement of education. No doubt it is true, as Stenhouse claims, that teachers have often taught primarily for examination results and that the examinations have often had little to do with testing understanding. But one might conclude from this that examinations should be improved and the attitudes of teachers changed, not that learning objectives should have an insignificant place in the practice of education.

A final comment on Stenhouse's preoccupation with the behaviourist model of learning objectives: he correctly notices that this model reflects a view of objectivity that depends on precise instruments of measurement with a minimum of human judgment. In rejecting the model it seems that he makes two mistaken assumptions: that where assessment involves human judgment it cannot be objective, and that no version of a learning outcomes model could include a significant place for human judgment.

If there are limitations to working exclusively or predominantly with learning objectives in the design and evaluation of a curriculum, Stenhouse's concentration on the processes and content of teaching is also subject to serious inadequacies. He claims that principles of procedure for teaching and learning can be derived from an examination of worthwhile activities, engagement in which is the purpose of education. While one does not need any further purpose beyond the worthwhile activity itself, there is a fundamental objective in following the principles of procedure that are said to characterize the process of education; namely, to reach the point at which the learner is able to engage effectively in the worthwhile activity. The principles of procedure must, therefore, either include or be supplemented by criteria of achievement that the learner is to satisfy if teacher and learner can be said to be succeeding in the task of education.

Stenhouse seems willing to talk about aims of education but does not recognize that they cannot effectively guide the process of education unless they are related to learning outcomes through which they are progressively achieved. He refers to the pedagogical aim of the Humanities Project as being 'to develop understanding of social situations and human acts and of the controversial value issues which they raise'.[11] He correctly points out that such understanding can always be deepened (i.e. it cannot be achieved once and for all) and that the criteria of valid understanding are disputed. However, if the aim of understanding in the Humanities Project is to be pursued intelligibly, the teacher must at least have some notion of what constitutes an improvement in understanding, and how to recognize it when it occurs.

Stenhouse is correct in claiming that a strategy for teaching and learning cannot be derived simply from a statement of learning objectives, but it does not seem that principles of procedure, derived as he suggests, are more satisfactory in this respect. An analysis of the methods and theories of social science does not, by any means, settle what or how one should teach in the name of social science. A teacher in high school, for example, cannot avoid the question of what specifically he is trying to achieve in teaching social science to adolescents as part of a general education. We may expect that the objectives of a social science teacher in this context will be significantly different from those of someone teaching social science in a graduate degree program—even though both are concerned with the theories and modes of thought that make up social science.

I referred earlier to the pedagogical aims that are quoted by Stenhouse as examples of principles of procedure for *Man: A Course of Study.* It can be objected that these aims do not, in themselves, contain a blueprint for the process of teaching and learning. For example, the first aim quoted—'to initiate and develop in youngsters a process of question-posing (the inquiry method)'—does not even suggest how a teacher is to initiate and develop this process (unless one falsely assumes that there is one method of inquiry and that it marks out the one appropriate pedagogical procedure). It is also the case that these aims can just as easily be translated into learning objectives as into principles of procedure for teaching and learning. And it is as well that they can, otherwise teachers would not be in a position to recognize when they were succeeding at their task. In relation to the first aim again, at some point the teacher will need to assess the efforts of his students against the criteria of significant and relevant question-posing in the context of systematic inquiry. Merely being able to ask a lot of questions would not be a satisfactory learning outcome.

Thus, even when we approach the question of curriculum design and evaluation from the perspective of the teaching process, it is not possible to dispense with learning objectives. Ultimately this conclusion is based on a conceptual feature of teaching: that to be engaged in this activity one must be trying to bring about some kind of learning. Even Stenhouse cannot avoid this condition. In regard to the process model, he admits in an incidental way: 'I shall of course have to consider this approach in relation to changes in the students'.[12]

Illuminative Evaluation: An Alternative to the Objectives Model

In the foregoing comments, I hope to have thrown doubt on Stenhouse's outright rejection of learning objectives as a crucial element in curriculum evaluation. I wish now to discuss the style of curriculum evaluation that has recently been developing in opposition to the objectives model and which Stenhouse strongly endorses. It should be stressed that there is not a sharply defined single alternative; Stenhouse himself discusses four variations. During the past decade a number of curriculum evaluators in the United States and Britain, influenced by one another's work, have reacted in similar ways against the established procedures and have advocated theories and practices of curriculum evaluation that share significant common features. Despite variations of detail, I believe they may justifiably be treated as exponents of a common style. They have hardly yet had time to work out systematically the issues of methodology and the more general theory of curriculum evaluation. In the United States, Robert Stake has been an influential exponent of the new style. An example of the views that he and others like him take is given in *School Evaluation: The Politics and Process,* edited by Ernest R. House. A good introduction to the British version of the new style is presented in *Curriculum Evaluation Today: Trends and Implications,* edited by David Tawney. As I mentioned at the beginning, Barry MacDonald, Malcolm Parlett and David Hamilton are among the leading British proponents. In the present discussion, I shall be concerned with the new style of evaluation as it is interpreted by these three writers.[13]

Before I describe the methodology and purpose of evaluation that characterize this new style, it will be useful to state briefly the main criticisms that its exponents make against the predominant traditional approach. We have already examined the major criticism in discussing Stenhouse's challenge to the use of learning objectives in curriculum evaluation.

The traditional procedure against which the criticisms are directed has worked on the assumption that the value of a curriculum, interpreted as the blueprint of goals, materials, and directives for teaching and learning, can best be assessed by the use of precisely quantifiable tests that measure the extent to which the intended goals of the curriculum have been realized in the achievements of the learner. It is assumed that process variables are accounted for by multivariate analysis. This whole procedure, as Parlett and Hamilton note[14], reflects the dominance that psychological measurement has exercised over educational research. They also claim that the methods adopted were first developed by agricultural botanists for measuring the relative crop yield of different seed strains.

In summary, the principal criticisms made by the new-style evaluators against the traditional procedure of evaluation—the agricultural model—are as follows. It will be noticed that they do not always distinguish sharply between a perceived defect in the nature of the traditional method and in the manner in which it has in fact been employed.

(i) Any educational situation contains numerous relevant factors. In the agricultural model, these are to be treated either by being randomized through very large samples or by strict experimental control. Each approach presents serious practical difficulties. The first is not feasible, for example, as a means of evaluating curriculum material during the formative stage. Even in attempting to overcome the difficulties, these methods tend to deal with abstract factors rather than the real world of teachers, students, and schools.

(ii) The agricultural model must either assume that there are no significant local adaptations of the curriculum between the point of input and the measurement of output or else prevent such adaptation even when it may be educationally desirable. Atypical and local variations in results are smoothed out in the statistical generalizations, and the model is not geared to assess any unintended outcomes.

(iii) The traditional methods falsely assume that there is a single set of normative criteria of evaluation equally relevant to all groups who may be interested in the decision that is made about a curriculum. It is too readily assumed that even among the group of professional curriculum developers there can be substantial agreement about aims, intended outcomes, and criteria of achievement.

(iv) The preoccupation with quantitative data disregards other evidence that may be crucial for explanation and evaluation, for example, the judgment of an observer on variations in the motivation of students or the enthusiasm of a teacher within the one class.

(v) Curriculum evaluation on the agricultural model has fitted neatly with the policy of large-scale centralized curriculum development. In this context, the evaluators come in practice to focus all their attention on the means and to accept the ends (the normative criteria of evaluation) as determined by the sponsors of the development—usually a government agency.

(vi) Traditional evaluators have been preoccupied with the production of materials rather than the encouragement of change by teachers and a study of ways in which new curricula can be most effectively introduced into schools. They have addressed the questions that have been raised by administrators and researchers rather than those of teachers and students.

Against this formidable catalogue of complaints, what positive proposals do the critics make on the method and purpose of curriculum evaluation? The first basic difference in the new evaluators' approach is that they focus their attention not on the outcome but on what is occurring in a school or classroom as a curriculum program is being implemented. They see their work as clearly analogous to that of a social anthropologist and claim to use similar methods. Parlett and Hamilton speak of two key concepts: the instructional system (a coherent plan for teaching, a curriculum blueprint) and the learning milieu (the unique cultural, social, psychological, and material context in which a given group of teachers and pupils work). The task of the evaluator is to study the form that an instructional system takes in a specific learning milieu. The broad aim is to provide a careful description and interpretation of how a curriculum innovation (or existing program) works; how it is affected by different school contexts; what those who are using it regard as its main advantages and disadvantages; what actual effect it has on student learning, and so on. Parlett and Hamilton stress that their approach is not 'a standard methodology package but a general research strategy',[15] that the problem defines the method used, not vice versa. Among the background influences on the methods used for this purpose are the following: school-based observation studies; participant observation studies; cross-cultural studies of schooling; studies of social change focusing on human relations; 'transactional' evaluation; methods of historical inquiry and journalism.

Parlett and Hamilton describe several broad stages and procedures in the process of evaluation. The curriculum evaluator, like a social anthropologist or natural historian, accepts the complex situation of each school as given and attempts to describe its most significant features, the pattern of cause and effect and other relationships, how individuals respond to the form of organization, etc. The work begins with a general exploratory stage in which the evaluator attempts to identify the most significant features of the situation. In the second stage, these features are subject to more selective and intensive observation and inquiry. Finally the evaluator attempts to identify cause and effect relationships and other general principles that are operating in the implementation of the project and to suggest explanations–such as why teachers take different attitudes to the curriculum material.

During these overlapping stages, the evaluator uses four main ways of obtaining data: observation (both informal and codified, directed to uncovering the most significant features); interviews (open-ended and discursive rather than structured, and intended to discover how the participants view their situation); questionnaires and test results (these are used to supplement the other data; varying test scores are of interest mainly in so far as they call for explanation); documentary and background information (minutes and tapes of committee meetings, student assignments, background history of the project, etc.).

In addition to the directly methodological issues, it is obvious that this whole procedure reflects a particular interpretation of the nature and purpose of curriculum evaluation. The connection is not, however, a logically necessary one; the methods that have been outlined are compatible with a quite different view of what curriculum evaluation involves. Among the writers being discussed, the essence of their interpretation of curriculum evaluation is effectively caught in the following quotations. According to Robert Stake, curriculum evaluation consists in 'a comprehensive statement of what the program is observed to be' with useful reference to the satisfaction and dissatisfaction that appropriately selected people feel towards it'.[16] Martin Trow, who named the approach 'illuminative evaluation', argues:

> Research on innovation can be enlightening to the innovator and to the whole academic community by clarifying the processes of education and by helping the innovator and other interested parties to identify those procedures, those elements in the educational effort, which seem to have had desirable results.[17]

Parlett and Hamilton have adopted the expression 'illuminative evaluation' and sum up their account of it by stressing that it 'concentrates on the information-gathering rather than the decision-making component of evaluation. The task is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex reality (or realities) surrounding the project: in short, to illuminate'.[18] Finally MacDonald emphasizes the same kind of role for the evaluator: 'his main activity is collection of definitions of, and reactions to, the programme'.[19] In MacDonald's interpretation, the job of the evaluator is to provide a non-recommendatory report for all groups involved in, or affected by, a decision on the future of a curriculum program. And in preparing information, the evaluator must make no presumptions about its possible misuse.

The most important element in this account of curriculum evaluation is the sharp distinction drawn between information giving and decision making. While it is admitted that value judgments enter into the description and interpretation of curriculum projects in action, evaluation in the obvious sense–i.e. as a judgment of worth–is treated as part of the decision-making task. Paradoxically, therefore, the curriculum evaluators in this interpretation, while they assist the evaluators, do not themselves evaluate curriculum. The fundamental argument for this position is that the normative criteria on which evaluation and policy decisions are to be made vary according to the predominant interests of the groups concerned (e.g. the participating teachers and students, the parents, the project designers, the government department of education) and that even when the perspective of interest is the same, there is often dispute over what criteria are appropriate. It is concluded that in a democracy curriculum evaluators should disseminate as widely as possible the relevant information on the working of a project in order to help all the groups involved make an informed decision.

Following MacDonald's account[20], we may summarize the role of the curriculum evaluator in this way: the task is not to judge the worth of the curriculum but (i) to identify those who will have to make the decision, and (ii) 'lay before them those facts of the case that are recognized by them as relevant to their concerns'. The curriculum evaluators should not pass judgment on the worth of a curriculum because (i) educational power and accountability are dispersed in our society; (ii) curriculum programs as implemented vary significantly from one place to another; (iii) there are different, even conflicting, notions of educational excellence; (iv) in a pluralist society, evaluators have no right to promote their personal values or educational ideology.

Two other aspects of this interpretation of curriculum evaluation should be mentioned: the relationship of evaluation to curriculum development and educational research, and the political character of curriculum evaluation.

On the first point, there seems to be agreement that evaluation should be closely related to curriculum development but that it should be applied to the curriculum blueprint only in contexts of use. Because teachers are seen as the principal developers, the evaluation of any curriculum, whatever its publication status, is always developmental or formative in character. There seems to be no place for the evaluation of a curriculum blueprint as such, either before it has been tested in practice or after publication.

Hamilton suggests a fundamental link between a theory of evaluation and a theory of curriculum design.[21] Although his position is not very fully or clearly argued, he seems to be claiming that the agricultural model of evaluation fits in best with curricula designed primarily on the basis of knowledge content, while illuminative evaluation favours curricula that respond to varying interests and circumstances of students or emphasizes teaching strategies rather than materials. Under certain aspects these associations are obvious; however it is by no means clear that there is a strict logical connection between the methodology or methods of evaluation and the principles on which a curriculum is designed.

In regard to the relationship between evaluation and educational research, there seems to be some disagreement–at least between Stenhouse and MacDonald. The former sees evaluation as a part of curriculum development and both evaluation and development as directly contributing to educational research. Evaluation, in Stenhouse's words, 'is research into the nature and problems of educational innovation and the betterment of schools', and 'the developer should be an investigator rather than a reformer'.[22] It is not surprising that he is critical of evaluation that does not explain what it assesses and that he would expect the evaluation of a new curriculum project to contribute to a general theory of curriculum innovation.

MacDonald, in contrast, makes a clear distinction between educational research and evaluation. His basic reason is that the researcher, although influenced by values, can work independently of political issues, whereas it is impossible for the evaluator to escape taking a political position. The evaluator's inquiry always bears on decisions that affect conflicting interest groups and social values and that determine the distribution of power in the form of resources and jobs. He must choose what information to give and to whom; and the choice has inescapable political consequences.

This view of the evaluator's political role seems to be endorsed by all the proponents of illuminative evaluation–including Stenhouse. MacDonald offers a typology of curriculum evaluation as a political activity[23]: the bureaucratic type, in which the evaluator simply accepts the values of the government agency and assesses the efficiency of a curriculum to serve these values; the autocratic, in which the evaluator's criteria, methods, and findings in assessing programs for the government agency are submitted to the scrutiny of the research community; and the democratic, in which the evaluator respects value pluralism in the society and makes information on the program available to the widest possible audience. Even if we knew nothing else about MacDonald's program, it would not be difficult to guess that he would favour the democratic type of evaluation.

Critical Comments on Illuminative Evaluation

The proponents of illuminative evaluation have clearly provided an antidote to an inflexibly applied output measurement approach. In particular, they are attentive to the complex context of educational practice in which the best-laid curriculum plans are often radically modified, directed to ends that perhaps would not be accepted by their designers, and are found to produce quite unexpected consequences. They have applied to curriculum evaluation a range of methods which are intended to gain knowledge of the less tangible, but often more significant, aspects of human action. On this basis, they may be in a better position than exponents of output measurement to judge the value of a curriculum program, to explain why it has succeeded or failed, to suggest how it might be improved or used more effectively. There are, however, some serious difficulties with the anthropological model of curriculum evaluation—at least in the version we have been examining.

In the first place, the methods of illuminative evaluation are open to criticism. While personal judgment plays a part in any research method, there are particularly severe problems of subjectivity when studies of complex human situations rely predominantly on methods of participant and external observation and unstructured interviews. This is true even though there are techniques for mitigating or checking on the extent of the investigator's bias. Problems arise from both the conscious and unconscious selective perspective of the observer and from the influence that the observer's role may have on the process being studied. Donald Campbell, for example, lists[21] sources of systematic error even when the observer is not a participant.[24]. The author of a fairly recent critique of illuminative evaluation, Carl Parsons, has claimed that, despite these general difficulties, the advocates of this style of evaluation tend to neglect the more rigorous refinements developed in the social sciences for the methods they employ.[25] Parlett and Hamilton, at least, are aware of the difficulties. However they do not seem to recognize how extraordinarily demanding are the conditions they agree should be met by anyone engaging in illuminative evaluation. Such a person needs a rare combination of intellectual skills, moral integrity, and personal tact.[26]

It may be claimed that illuminative evaluation is mainly concerned with giving an account of the way in which those directly involved in implementing a curriculum program, teachers and students, perceive the situation. However, an evaluator as distinct from a mere reporter must still try to determine whether these participants are accurately expressing their views, the extent to which they correctly perceive what is going on, and how their perceptions are to be interpreted in reaching conclusions about the curriculum program.[27]

In addition to the problem of subjectivity, the methods of illuminative evaluation seem to place severe limitations on the possibility of generalizing from the conclusions of a study. As we have seen, Parlett and Hamilton stress the uniqueness of the learning milieu and thus of any curriculum program in application. It would seem, therefore, that the findings of a study could apply only to a curriculum as it had been realized in this or that specific learning milieu. Parlett and Hamilton are also aware of this objection. They face it by modifying in effect their emphasis on the uniqueness of each learning milieu. They finally admit that there are many common significant features from one situation of schooling to another; in fact it is an aim of illuminative evaluation to contribute to a better understanding of these common features. This admission may secure the possibility of generalizing, but it also seems to yield a significant part of the ground on which the argument against the traditional model of evaluation is based.

I noted earlier that the methods used by supporters of illuminative evaluation do not entail their interpretation of the nature and purpose of curriculum evaluation. Whether or not the methods can be defended, the interpretation is subject to serious difficulties of its own.

The crucial weakness, I believe, lies in the attempt to identify the evaluator's role with the giving of information on a curriculum project and to separate it sharply from the making of judgments about the value of the project. If illuminative evaluation really did consist simply in giving information, it would satisfy the role that MacDonald's argument, referred to earlier, requires. The problem of the observers' various perspectives would be less serious than if they were trying to assess what they saw, and it would be less daunting for them to try to serve all interested groups without favouring any of them in the material they provided. However, to achieve this objective, it would be necessary to specify quite rigorously the kinds of information on which the observers were to report. Even decisions on what is to count as relevant information often reflect controversial judgments of value. In a highly pluralistic society, it is doubtful whether illuminative evaluation even as information giving could progress beyond routine details without in fact showing partiality to one or another of the interested groups.

The only alternative would seem to be for the observers to be able to take the perspective of each of the interested groups and provide all the information they would judge to be relevant from each of these perspectives. From the quotations cited earlier, this appears to be the procedure that supporters of illuminative evaluation have in mind.[28] It is not made clear how an individual observer, or even a team of them, could perform this extremely difficult task. In any case, it seems to be unnecessary. In the so-called democratic scheme that MacDonald envisages it would surely be more satisfactory for each interested group to employ or be provided with an investigator who would obtain full information on a curriculum development in terms of the group's own perspectives. To the extent that observers could impartially provide useful and illuminating information for all interested groups, one thing I think is clear: their work could not properly be described as evaluation.

In the account Parlett and Hamilton give of the process of illuminative evaluation, it seems that the observer's role is not strictly limited to information giving but extends to interpretation and explanation. Once the task includes interpretative description, evaluations will, in varying degree, already be at least implicitly present. One cannot, for example, describe the relationship of a principal to other members of staff in curriculum decision making as autocratic without importing an evaluation. Despite MacDonald's demurral, this point is glaringly illustrated in the terms he chooses to describe the political character of various types of curriculum evaluation. While describing, interpreting, and evaluating are logically distinct activities, our final evaluation of a thing depends on the cumulative force of various interpretative descriptions of the brute facts in uses of language that express a judgment of value (compare 'the car was being driven at 50 km/h in rain along a city street at 5.30 p.m.' and 'the car was being driven dangerously').

Thus, if interpretation is a significant part of the observer's role, we save the aspect of evaluation in illuminative evaluation, but the problems that arise from the observer's own value perspective and the effort to respond eclectically to the value perspectives of all interested groups now become much more serious. How is it possible for anyone to interpret the complex issues in the application of a curriculum—the technical and value questions about knowledge, learning, curriculum design, education—in a way that responds coherently and without bias to a range of diverse and sometimes incompatible value perspectives? Even the choice of MacDonald's democratic model would run counter to the values of some of the groups the evaluator intends to serve. In so far as illuminative evaluation includes an interpretation of curriculum programs it will be seriously deceptive in practice, for while it purports to make no judgment on the value of the program, it cannot avoid doing so.[29]

There seems to be an inconsistency in the theory of illuminative evaluation over the scale at which it is seen as operating. One of the consequences of the theory's emphasis on the variability of the learning milieu in curriculum development and evaluation must be that curricula cannot be effectively planned by a national or other central agency of any size.[30] If this aspect of the theory is taken quite literally, it would seem that the scale of planning should be constrained to an individual school. However, the advocates of illuminative evaluation clearly assume a situation in which central agencies (usually of the government) design curriculum blueprints while evaluators (in the role they envisage) contribute in some fashion to judgments on the value of these blueprints in application for the whole area within the jurisdiction of the central agency. In MacDonald's typology, democratic evaluation as much as the other forms is related to national curriculum projects. It is, he says, 'an information service to the whole community . . . The criterion of success is the range of audiences served. The report aspires to 'best-seller status'.[31] If illuminative evaluation abandoned this inconsistent macrocosmic intent and restricted its work to one school or at most the schools of one district, it would at least increase its chances of providing appropriate data for the diverse groups involved, or affected by, the development and evaluation of a curriculum.

In the scheme of illuminative evaluation, it is not made clear just how the final decision about a curriculum project is to be reached and how it is related to the work of evaluation—particularly when the project is on a national or otherwise large scale. Do all the interested groups participate in reaching a composite evaluation and policy decision, or does each form its own evaluation and then lobby a distinct group of policy makers? In addition to the scheme's mistake in trying to separate interpretation from evaluation in order to ensure a common nonevaluative report for all interested groups, it fails to distinguish between evaluating a curriculum and reaching a final policy decision. Nor does the scheme give attention to the different evaluations of a curriculum that may be made depending on the domain or domains of value from which the criteria are drawn. A curriculum may be evaluated not only from the standpoint of specifically educational value, but also in reference to such other dimensions of value as the political, the social, the economic. It is not clear precisely what role illuminative evaluation is thought to play in relation to the full range of value criteria or where the judgments are made and put together. Whatever part the final policy makers may have in these judgments, it will also be necessary for them to take account of such other matters as public resources and relative priorities, which lie outside the scope of curriculum evaluation.

The obscurity on the procedures of decision making and the ambivalence over the extent to which evaluation enters the process of illuminative description make it somewhat difficult to assess MacDonald's claim about the inescapable political character of curriculum evaluation. However it seems that the claim is somewhat exaggerated. It is important to keep in view the distinction between directly and indirectly political actions. An unsolicited evaluation of a curriculum project based on educational criteria and published in a scholarly journal may have political consequences. In this sense a large part of educational research may be said to be political.[32] It is quite a different matter, however, when evaluation (or, contrary to MacDonald's distinction, any educational research) is based on criteria of judgment that are predominantly political. If MacDonald's evaluators select information in order to buttress preferred political values among the interested groups they are supposed to serve, then obviously their work is directly political. In determining the political character of evaluation, the crucial point, then, is not whether evaluators are working for a government agency or independently, or whether they intend their work to influence a political decision, but what the predominant criteria are on which they base their evaluations. I am assuming that there are distinctive educational values not reducible to political values or ideology.

In the interpretation of the evaluator's role, there is a more important issue than the ,question of its political nature. MacDonald's model of democratic evaluation has at least one thing in common with the bureaucratic model he opposes: the evaluator does not pass judgment on the criteria on which the assessment of a curriculum finally depends. In the bureaucratic model, the evaluator takes as given the end values of the curriculum sponsors or designers. His task is to judge the efficiency of the curriculum as a means for realizing these values. In the democratic model, the evaluator simply accepts the actual range of perspectives of the groups involved in the development and evaluation of a curriculum.[33] Here the task (at least in theory) is to provide each group with the kind of information about the curriculum in operation that he estimates they would perceive as relevant. In their own ways, each model limits the evaluator to an exercise in technical rationality. If his task is to be comprehensively or critically rational, it must include some reflection on the particular end values that a curriculum is designed to serve or the actual range of expectations about education held by groups within the society. In doing this, an evaluator will at least make explicit his own assumptions and criteria and the way in which they are justified.

My final critical comment on illuminative evaluation is directed at its preoccupation with evaluating curricula in operation. In relation to this issue I have already referred to the difficulty of generalizing beyond the situations studied, and to the constricting effect of relying predominantly on the opinions that the immediate local participants have of what is happening. While it is evidently important to test the curriculum blueprint in practice, what I wish to claim here is that there is also an important place for the direct evaluation of the blueprint itself. This kind of evaluation applies both during the phase of development and after a program has finally been published by its designers.[34]

In addition to the aspects of content and teaching/learning procedures, a curriculum should contain a statement of the main learning outcomes it hopes to promote, and an explanation and justification of the program it proposes. The main assumptions of the program—about the nature of the knowledge content, the relationship of the school to its social and cultural context, the learning outcomes thought to be desirable, the appropriateness of the suggested modes of learning to the abilities and interests of the kinds of student for whom the curriculum is intended, and so on—need to be made explicit where necessary and all critically assessed.

These and the other aspects of blueprint evaluation can obviously be useful during the period of development. In fact, this level of evaluation is necessary if observers of the program as implemented are to be in a position to interpret what features of the situation, they observe, bear on an evaluation of the curriculum, rather than of the teachers or students or the various conditions in a particular school. For materials that have already been published, a clear and reasoned evaluation offers a guide to teachers and schools, whether they are trying to reach a decision to accept or reject a program or how to implement it as effectively as possible. Before embarking on *Man: A Course of Study,* it would certainly be useful for teachers to know how it was working in other similar schools. I think it would be equally useful for them to read a critical discussion on the adequacy of the materials and teaching guidelines for developing the emotional responses and attitudes that are among the objectives of the program, or a challenge to one of the basic learning objectives: that of encouraging an acceptance of cultural relativism.

Conclusion

To conclude this discussion I would stress, in the first place, that illuminative evaluation seems to attempt both too little and too much. It does too little in that it fails to carry through the task of evaluating–in fact it ends in the confusing condition of being neither a straight description nor a fully developed explicit evaluation. It does too much in trying to gear its report to the values of every group that may have a stake in the decision, and in adopting an explanatory role that even extends to building a general theory of curriculum innovation.

In relation to methodology, I believe it is fair to claim that, in its opposition to the output measurement approach, illuminative evaluation has been preoccupied with different methods and techniques of inquiry rather than with a radically different methodology.[35] Fundamentally both approaches subscribe to a positivist version of the social scientist's role in evaluating: to provide the factual minor premises which, when coupled with general value commitments that people happen to hold, yield various normative conclusions. However, proponents of illuminative evaluation have also consciously supported the rejection of important aspects of positivist methodology, in particular, the interpretation of objectivity as a function of precisely quantified observations and the mechanical causal model of explanation for human action, which ignores the role of reasons, intentions, purposes. While these beliefs are justifiably rejected, it does not follow that precise measurement is never appropriate in the study of human action. The outright repudiation of the appeal to learning objectives specified in behavioural terms is related to this exaggeration. The position I have supported against Stenhouse may be summarized in two points: (i) to treat learning objectives as the key to curriculum design and evaluation or to ignore their importance in this process is equally mistaken;[36] (ii) the excesses of the behavioural objectives movement should not blind us to the critical role that changes in a person's behaviour play as evidence of desired learning.

At least for some of the exponents of illuminative evaluation, the main motivation for their support seems to arise from their commitment to ideals of participatory democracy. However, as I have tried to show, they have not yet given any close attention to the different kinds of evaluations and decisions that affect the design and adoption of a curriculum and to the various degrees of participation that individuals and groups may justifiably claim in these activities.

Stenhouse proposes that we should eliminate the conceptual distinction between curriculum evaluation and development. But as these are two independent activities, there is a clear advantage in marking the distinction conceptually. It is obvious that a curriculum should be evaluated both during and after development. For this purpose, it may be desirable for a team of curriculum designers to include some evaluators who share in the whole task and are sympathetic to the guiding values and objectives that are adopted. Such evaluators might also offer explanations and theorize about a curriculum project or curriculum innovation generally. However, what I wish to emphasize is that there is a significant place for curriculum evaluators who are not engaged in the development of a curriculum and may independently assess the end values as well as the means, and who concentrate on justifying their assessment rather than explaining what they assess.[37] (This is not to deny that an explanation is sometimes required as a basis for an adequate evaluation.) I have also made a claim for the importance of evaluating published curriculum blueprints, where the task need have no connection with development or explanation.

The final summary point I wish to stress is that curriculum evaluation in all its aspects is an extremely complex activity–much more so than either the product or the process approach seems to recognize. This is the case even when we concentrate directly on the curriculum program itself and avoid the complications that arise when we try to evaluate it in a context of use. One has only to think of some of the questions that have to be faced in evaluating a curriculum blueprint: about the justification of the general aims and the related learning objectives, the selection and arrangement of knowledge content, the appropriateness of pedagogical and learning procedures, the comparative value of the program in relation to other curriculum material in the same area, how well the program has been designed as a guide for teaching and learning (e.g. whether it is internally consistent, unambiguous, too detailed, too brief), the feasibility of the program (e.g. what knowledge and skills it expects of teachers, the cost of materials). These questions call on such a range of value domains, knowledge, and technical skill that the effective evaluation of any substantial curriculum project must depend on the collaboration of a team of evaluators. If we speak of an individual as being, in some sense, an expert in curriculum evaluation, we should do so with appropriate caution.

Notes and References

[1] R.W. Tyler, *Basic Principles of Curriculum Instruction,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949 (30th impression, 1970), p.57.

[2] See, for example, M. MacDonald-Ross, Behavioural objectives: A critical review, In M. Galby, J. Greenwald, R. West (Eds), *Curriculum Design,* London: Croom Helm, 1975, 335–386.

[3] I use 'methodology' to refer to the more general theoretical issues that concern the nature of inquiry, while 'method' refers to a particular procedure by which information is gathered, hypotheses tested, etc. A method of inquiry may be compatible with diverse methodologies, and the appropriateness or adequacy of a method may be challenged without necessarily disturbing the underlying methodology.

[4] L. Stenhouse, *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development,* London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1975, Ch. 6.

[5] ibid., Ch.7.

[6] ibid., p.91.

[7] ibid., p.92. These are three of seven pedagogical aims quoted by Stenhouse from J.P. Hanley, D.K. Whitla, E.W. Moo, and A.S. Walter, *Curiosity, Competence, Community – Man: A Course of Study, an Evaluation,* 2 vols, Cambridge, Mass.: Education Development Center, 1969, 1970. Stenhouse omits reference to the list of learning outcomes that the authors also give.

[8] Stenhouse, op.cit., Ch.8.

[9] This distinction has often been made in criticism of radical behaviourism. It is used in the context of curriculum evaluation by J.P. White, The concept

of curriculum evaluation, *Journal of Curriculum Studies,* 1971, **3**(2), 101–12. To regard behaviour as evidence of learning involving mental acts and states is not to support methodological behaviourism, which in practice ignores the reality of these acts and states.

[10] Stenhouse, op.cit., p.81.

[11] ibid., p.93.

[12] ibid., p.90.

[13] I shall draw mainly on the following: M. Parlett and D. Hamilton, Evaluation as illumination; B. MacDonald, Evaluation and the control of education, In D. Tawney (Ed.), *Curriculum Evaluation Today: Trends and Implications,* London: Macmillan Education, 1976; D. Hamilton, *Curriculum Evaluation,* Melbourne: Macmillan Australia, 1976. For a comprehensive collection of essays by these and other like-minded writers, see D. Hamilton et al. (Eds), *Beyond the Numbers Game,* London: Macmillan, 1977.

[14] Parlett and Hamilton, op.cit., p.85.

[15] ibid., p.92. The supporters of illuminative evaluation seem, for the most part, to follow the theoretical outlook and methods of ethnomethodology. As with the parent doctrine, there is the question of how the role and perspective of the observer engaged in a form of social science—as distinct from the participants whose perspectives are said to constitute the social reality—are taken into account.

[16] Quoted in Hamilton, op.cit., pp.92–93.

[17] Quoted in Parlett and Hamilton, op.cit. p.89.

[18] Parlett and Hamilton, op.cit., p.99.

[19] MacDonald, op.cit., p.134.

[20] ibid., pp.128–129.

[21] Hamilton, op.cit., Ch.5.

[22] Stenhouse, op.cit., p.120.

[23] MacDonald, op.cit., pp.132–134. An interesting inconsistency in Stenhouse is that while he supports MacDonald on the inevitably political nature of curriculum evaluation, he accuses the supporters of learning objectives of having a mainly political interest.

[24] D.T. Campbell, Systematic error on the part of human links in communication systems, *Information and Control,* 1959, **1**, 334–369.

[25] C. Parsons, The new evaluation: a cautionary note, *Journal of Curriculum Studies,* 1976, **8**(2), 125–138. On this point see pp.128–130. Parsons argues that illuminative evaluation does not really introduce any new theoretical model of evaluation. It is preoccupied with the application of methods and does not even attempt to import social scientific theories that are associated with these methods.

[26] Parlett and Hamilton, op.cit., pp.97–98. B. MacDonald and R. Walker suggest that the kind of case study required in education 'calls for a fusion of the styles of the artist and the scientist'. Case-study and the social philosophy of educational research, *Cambridge Journal of Education,* 1975, **5**(1), p.3.

[27] There is an interesting inconsistency in the account MacDonald and Walker (op.cit.) give of case-study research in education. While they stress that the

researcher is constrained by 'practitioners' definitions of situations, conceptual structures and language' (p.9), they acknowledge that at all levels of the educational system 'what people think they are doing, what they say they are doing, what they appear to others to be doing, and what in fact they are doing, may be sources of considerable discrepancy' (p.8).

[28] In practice, the exponents of illuminative evaluation do not give equal weight to the perspective of each interested group. Because they are preoccupied with curriculum in the context of use, they tend to treat the views of the direct participants as dominant. As Parsons (op.cit., p.134) points out, this gives their inquiry a rather limited context–one of the criticisms they make against the traditional forms of evaluation.

[29] The one criticism Stenhouse makes of illuminative and related forms of evaluation is that, while concerned about questions of merit and worth, their criteria of judgment are obscure–a fairly damaging criticism of anyone claiming to be an evaluator. Stenhouse's own account of criteria is itself rather unclear. However, he does stress a fundamental point about curriculum evaluation: that assessment of a curriculum program in application must be related to an assessment of the curriculum blueprint in itself. See Stenhouse, op.cit., pp.116–120.

[30] As we have seen, one of the criticisms made by Stenhouse and the new style evaluators against the output measurement model is that it is geared to serve and encourage the production of curriculum programs by central agencies. In relation to Stenhouse's own Humanities Project, for schools that were not involved in the developmental process, the published materials that form the Project are equivalent to a centrally produced curriculum.

[31] MacDonald, op.cit., p.134.

[32] In appropriate circumstances any knowledge may have political significance. The question of who shall have access to what knowledge has an inescapable political dimension. But, from a political viewpoint, there is an important difference to be marked between, say, a theory of participatory democracy and a theory of light.

[33] This point is made by Parsons, op.cit., pp.133–134.

[34] Parlett and Hamilton (op.cit., p.100) draw an analogy between the curriculum evaluator and the drama critic. While the analogy is a useful one, I do not think the authors have worked it out particularly well. In the first place, drama critics–unlike illuminative curriculum evaluators–usually do make judgments about the merit of the plays and performances they review. They do not try simply to describe and interpret, without any evaluative implications, what is going on in the play as an information service for prospective theatre goers. In the second place, drama critics usually do distinguish carefully in their evaluation between the play (as the dramatic literary work) and the particular production (or, in certain cases, the particular performance). When a play fails, it is sensible to ask whether the fault lies mainly with the playwright or the producers (actors, director etc.). It is equally important to keep this distinction in mind when evaluating a curriculum.

[35] See Parsons, op.cit., p.131.

[36] Michael Scriven's proposal for goal-free evaluation still puts emphasis on learning outcomes–but on what is actually achieved rather than on what is intended. His claim that it is preferable for the evaluator not to know the intended goals of a program is, I believe, mistaken. There is no reason why a knowledge of the intended goals should inhibit an evaluator from noticing unintended outcomes. Surely a comprehensive evaluation should assess the extent to which a program is successful in achieving the ends for which it was designed, how effectively these have been formulated, and whether they are appropriate and worthwhile objects of an educational process. See M. Scriven, Goal-free evaluation, In E.R. House (Ed.), *School Evaluation: The Politics and Process*, Berkeley, Ca: McCutchan, 1973, 319–331.

[37] On the question of external evaluators Scriven (op.cit., p.328) notes: 'If you are really interested in success, rather than in the feeling of success, you have to bring independents in to look'.

Part IV: Moral Education

Over the past 15 or so years there has been a notable resurgence of interest in moral education. Renewed attention has been given not only to the indirect influence of the school environment but also to the place of moral education in the formal curriculum. In the latter, the stress has tended to be placed on the skills involved in discussing and reasoning about moral questions, particularly of the kind that relate directly to the social and political order. For this reason, the study of morality (or 'values education' as it is often more vaguely called) has commonly been located in the context of social studies or social science. The schools' interest in public issues probably reflects the general growing concern in western societies since World War II with the moral values that are at stake in all kinds of social practices (the issues of war and peace, the treatment of racial minorities, the mining of uranium, the hunting of whales, and so on). The preoccupation with skills of reasoning and inquiry in morality reflects, in part, the recent emphasis in educational practice generally on processes rather than content. The adoption of this approach is also attractive in that it seems to avoid the problems that arise over moral content in a pluralist society. Whatever influences these factors have had, there is no doubt that the work of Lawrence Kohlberg on developmental stages of moral reasoning and his application of the theory to moral education have had a substantial impact on the directions recently taken in this field.

The first chapter in this section examines the nature of reasoning in morality. It defends a view of moral reasoning as a process of interpretation in which the substantive moral concepts one possesses play a crucial role. In learning to reason about moral problems there are certain formal skills to be acquired, but basically it is a question of how a person or situation or action may justifiably be described in moral terms (as honest, fair, compassionate, selfish, deceitful, and so on). The way in which one learns the substance of moral concepts is not only crucial for the process of moral judgment but also for the translation of these judgments into action. They must be acquired with appropriate attitudes of approval or disapproval and related to appropriate emotions.

The second chapter discusses the place of moral education in the formal curriculum of the secondary school. There are three main sections. First, a case is made for its inclusion as a distinct area in the curriculum. Second, the teaching of morality in the context of particular subjects is examined. Specific comments are made on religion, literature, and the social sciences. In relation to the last of these, aspects of *Man: A Course of Study* and *The Social Education Materials Project* are discussed. Third, some concluding comments are made on moral education and the study of large-scale social topics.

Chapter 7

Reasoning in Morality: Why Content Matters in Moral Education

Some ethical theorists have attempted to distinguish moral principles and judgments in terms of purely formal criteria. Any claim that can satisfy these criteria is taken to be a moral one, regardless of its content. R.M. Hare is one of the best-known contemporary exponents of this approach and his influence is reflected in Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of stages in moral development.[1] In Kohlberg's account, each stage is said to be characterized by the typical form of moral reasoning used, not by the content of the reasons or the conclusions reached. The object of moral education, based on Kohlberg's theory, is to help each person reach the highest form of moral reasoning of which he is capable. This is to be achieved mainly by involving people in the discussion of moral dilemmas in which they are subject to the form of moral reasoning characteristic of the next stage beyond their own. Various other recent programs of moral education, perhaps less theoretically sophisticated than Kohlberg's, have also assumed a sharp separation between modes of reasoning in morality and the content of moral beliefs. They emphasize the acquisition of skills of rational inquiry, in some cases related immediately to understanding one's own values, in others to the discussion of significant public issues.

This preoccupation with the forms and skills of argument in moral education coincided with (and no doubt partly reflected) the revival of a more general trend in educational theory and practice to stress teaching and learning how to think (scientifically, mathematically, and so on) rather than what to think. The most influential exponent of this trend in its most recent form has been Jerome Bruner.[2] The separation of skills and content in morality also seems to provide a solution to the problem that the sharp division on moral issues in the society raises for the school when it engages in moral education. The school can concentrate on the skills of moral reasoning (presumably common to all different systems of moral beliefs) while maintaining admirable neutrality on the substance of moral beliefs and judgments.

Kohlberg and the other exponents of a formal approach do in fact (if not of necessity) import substantive moral values into their moral education programs; even the forms of moral reasoning they advocate have implications for the substance of morality. My intention here, however, is not to develop a critique of this kind of approach, but to discuss positively the role of substantive concepts in moral reasoning and practice and to indicate its bearing on the scope of moral education.

One kind of answer to the question of what distinguishes reasons, arguments, and so on as moral seeks to specify some common essential feature or features that all instances of moral discourse or action possess. It seems to me that this procedure is radically defective, whether one looks for common formal characteristics or for a common purpose that shapes the content. Why should we suppose that actual moralities are more or less adequate approximations to an ideal called Morality, or the moral point of view? The sense in which they are all moralities might be determined differently. I think a more appropriate procedure depends on treating morality as the kind of notion that has the following characteristics:

(i) Questions about the meaning of '*x*' can best be answered by describing the beliefs, attitudes, activities, etc. that constitute being or doing *x*. John Austin speaks of 'golfing' and 'happiness' as words of this kind.[3] When such concepts refer to complex historical institutions, the effort to refine them inevitably involves a critical selection of characteristic activities. But this task cannot begin unless some activities indisputably belong to the enterprise and unless the latter is marked by some relatively constant human intentions.

(ii) Whether something can be called '*x*' depends on establishing that it involves a sufficient range of the activities that constitute being or doing *x*. There is no clear rule for making such a decision, and the same pattern of features need not be possessed by all the practices to which we apply the term. In relation to these two characteristics, I think the concept 'morality' is like such concepts as 'work of art', 'education', 'democracy', 'science'.

My contention is that morality must be fundamentally distinguished by reference to certain public practices and institutions (including the range of related normative concepts, ideals, and attitudes): respect for life ('murder', 'suicide'); such notions as love, loyalty, justice, honesty, generosity, courage; truth telling ('lying', 'calumny'); promise keeping; institutions like that of political authority, property ('stealing'), the family (special relationships of love, fidelity, respect, and concepts such as 'adultery', 'incest'); and so on. I do not wish to imply that such concepts and practices (even if the list were much longer) provide a sufficient description of what is to be called morality. A moral agent does not for example tell the truth for any reason at all, but because he acknowledges that it is what deserves to be done.[4] Among the things involved in taking a moral point of view is seeing truth telling in this way. Truth telling will sometimes happen to be good from other points of view, such as one's self-interest; it is always good from a moral point of view. In pursuing the description of these other features, we may very easily slip into a condition that reflects a particular moral system or theory. We might be inclined to say, for example, that moral reasons must be recognized as overriding; but perhaps this need not be so. What I think can be justifiably claimed is that, if a system is to be called 'moral', it must involve a significant number of the concepts and practices I have mentioned or others that can be intelligibly related to them. That is, we recognize that someone is raising a moral question, stating a moral problem, and making a moral judgment about what should be done, from the substantive concepts in which he describes or argues about the situation. Regardless of a person's sincerity, logical tone of voice when using words like 'ought', consistency, and form of argument, we cannot say that he is engaged in moral inquiry unless he is using the substantive language of moral practice. Given that the recognition of a range of characteristic practices (and concepts) is the starting point, ethical theorists may then attempt to explain and interpret them and critically assess the diverse systems in which they are incorporated. In the process of this work, they may recommend the revision of certain moral practices or a whole moral system—or advocate a system of their own.

The point I wish to make here applies clearly to the cases that Kohlberg has used in his empirical work. Why is he confident that they are about moral problems at all and will be recognized as such? I suggest that it can only be because the situations involve conflicts between practices that are commonly accepted as what one does when acting morally. Words like 'right', 'wrong', 'duty', which occur in the questions following the cases, are pointless unless we are talking about practices we commend as good or reject as evil and in which duties arise. With words like 'should' and 'ought', we cannot reasonably assume that others will understand us as speaking morally unless the words are being used in the context of such practices. There is Heinz–to take one example from Kohlberg's stories–who steals an expensive drug in an effort to save his dying wife. We see this as a moral problem, perhaps even a dilemma, because on the one hand respect for life and the special moral relationship of husband and wife are involved, and on the other the institution of personal ownership and the moral notion of stealing. Suppose someone does not recognize or has no awareness of the moral aspect of property. 'Stealing' for him does not describe a moral act; it is simply more or less synonymous with 'taking'. He will not see Heinz's problem as a moral one. Perhaps he will be interested in the practical problem of how Heinz can acquire the drug or money necessary to buy it without being caught. The case would also be radically changed as a moral problem for anyone who did not believe that the moral concern for life extended to the use of extraordinary means, or who could not appreciate why a man should feel he had to make a special effort when the dying person was his wife.

The requirement of content I am defending, while it distinguishes a moral system from one that is immoral or non-moral, does not determine the relative excellence of moral systems. Such systems usually differ in some of the ideals and practices they accept as moral, and certainly in the relative emphasis or value given to the range of ideals and practices they include. Clearly there are important differences between, for example, Christian and military-style morality, or liberal and socialist morality.[5] We can recognize them all as moralities because they are concerned with a significant range of moral concepts and practices. By this criterion, we distinguish certain systems as 'moral' and to that extent may evaluate them, but the systems that meet the criterion are not thereby graded or ranked. It is not as though there were a complete list against which they were being measured, and in any case such an assessment would not have any bearing on the internal structure of a system. How we might compare the relative merit of different moral systems I will consider later. The method I have tried to exclude is that of abstracting the essential features of the notion of morality from one's experience of moral practices and systems and then reintroducing this notion as the yardstick for assessing the relative quality of actual or putative moralities. In making this move one inevitably prescribes what morality should be like, when the nature of morality is the precise issue in question.

I wish now to consider how attention to the content of morality affects the character of reasoning and decision in moral practice, and thus the nature of moral education. I should stress that I do not disagree with Kohlberg and the other theorists of moral education who assume that in moral decisions we need not be making arbitrary choices or simply giving vent to how we feel. Such decisions or judgments are rational processes; genuine argument and disagreement are possible.

Whatever features moral reasoning may have, they must be derived from actual moral practices and the way in which moral concepts are actually used. The philosopher cannot decide *a priori* what will constitute moral concepts and practices—unless he is trying to turn morality into something else. The correct logical interpretation of moral utterances and the forms of argument appropriate to moral judgment are in fact seriously disputed among philosophers. Some treat moral utterances as factual assertions, others think they are most like verdicts or that they express approval or make recommendations or issue a kind of command. The form of argument considered appropriate depends to some extent on these interpretations. It may be assimilated to the model of mathematical deduction or scientific induction, or it may be treated as unique, having most similarity with the logic of a judicial verdict or an aesthetic evaluation. (Some philosophers try to manage aesthetic arguments also in a strictly deductive or inductive way.) Whatever position is taken, it will make a difference to the content of an educational program in moral reasoning, and to the way in which the substance of morality is interpreted. A deductive view of moral reasoning, for example, magnifies the role of rules and principles in moral practice. At the same time, the differences among ethical theories on the logic of moral language should not be exaggerated. Despite the claims made against non-cognitivist theories by some objectivists, there are important similarities among all theories in the logical conditions required for moral judgment.[6]

The main feature to notice, however, is that the logical conditions which are distilled (or prescribed) cover only a part of what is required in moral judgment and practice. In most modern ethical theory, philosophers have concentrated on the general and virtually empty terms like 'ought' and 'good'. These are taken as the logical words of moral discourse, just as 'if', 'but', 'not', and so on are general logical words. Logical conditions for moral arguments formulated in such terms have something of a formal character. Certainly we do not have any particular content in mind. For example, we might accept the following rules for an evaluation: If I say '*x* is good', I cannot say '*y* is exactly the same as *x*, but *y* is not good'. If I say 'This is a good *x* because of properties *a, b, c*...', I must say that any other *x* possessing the same properties is good. For a moral judgment we might propose this rule: If I say that someone in situation *x* ought to do *y*, then for anyone else in the same situation I must agree that he ought to do *y*.[7] It is a mistake, however, to suppose that reasoning of this kind stands in the same relation to the practice of evaluating and morally judging as reasoning in mathematics or formal logic stands to the solution of mathematical or logical problems. In the latter, the logical processes are the essence of the activity, and the rules are strictly topic neutral, to use Ryle's term. In the former, reasoning according to such rules is only one of the complex processes of moral practice, and by no means an adequate account of even the directly conceptual aspect. Moreover the rules are not strictly formal: 'good' and 'ought' have a moral sense only from being used in the context of substantial moral concepts and practices. To say, 'This is a good *x*' may always logically involve a favourable evaluation regardless of what is substituted for *x*. But the utterance is also always a claim that *x* can be described in a way that justifies such an evaluation.[8] If we are speaking morally, we claim that there is a description that justifies the utterance from a moral point of view. We cannot give such a description without using substantial moral concepts. When the description is complete, it will be redundant (or useless) to add 'and so it is good'. Whatever can be said about the logic of 'ought' as a moral term depends on what can be said about substantial moral concepts. A decision on what these are (and are like) is presupposed by the effort to describe the logical characteristics of ought. Since the question of whether 'I ought to do *x*' depends on whether *x* can be described in substantial moral terms, the preoccupation with ought as such seems to be unnecessary. If we go back for a moment to the three examples of 'formal' rules: in the first two, the central questions in the task of evaluation are about the features of *x* in virtue of which *x* is said to be good, and whether *y* is the same as *x* in a relevant respect;

in the third, the moral questions are whether *y* is what should be done and what characteristics of an agent or his circumstances are to be taken as morally significant in determining whether the situation is the same for different people.

Suppose that a teacher's sole objective in moral education is to ensure that his students follow such general rules of reasoning in their moral judgments. If he is successful, the outcome will be that each student is more consistent in applying the standards and principles that he recognizes as moral. Unless the rules of reasoning do have consequences for the content of moral belief, such consistency is quite compatible with views and practices that most people would consider morally obnoxious. In this respect, to say that someone is consistent in his reasoning about moral questions is similar to saying that he is conscientious or sincere. The history of our own time provides ample evidence that people acting conscientiously can do atrocious things. Consistency is desirable, but in itself it is a gain in logical rather than moral value.

Morality is directly concerned with a certain range of actions: not only the manifest behaviour but the thoughts, attitudes, motives, feelings, dispositions of the agent. As with any other human practice, concepts form a crucial (and integral) part of morality. If a child's early moral education proceeds satisfactorily, he will come to acquire concepts of love, justice, truth telling, honesty, and so on in a particular way: distinctively moral terms are learnt in a context of behaviour for which adults, by means of verbal and other gestures, express praise or blame, admiration or contempt. One learns that moral terms do not simply express how this or that person happens to feel, or convey factual reports on what people believe should be done. They express approval of what (it is thought) deserves to be approved. While this 'speech act' should not be identified with the meaning of moral terms, it is a necessary condition if such terms are being used *qua* moral. Depending on the context, one may also be recommending, giving a verdict, issuing a kind of command, and so forth, in using moral terms. It is also a necessary part of learning such terms that attitudes of approval and disapproval are acquired towards what they describe, that feelings (such as sympathy and disgust) are aroused in relation to certain objects, and that doing or failing to do what we describe in moral terms involves certain emotions (e.g. guilt, remorse). A general feature of early moral experience is that we learn to perceive and treat human beings as different from other things. This is a matter of feeling, not simply belief (compare 'being afraid of *x*, which may entail but is not synonymous with 'believing that *x* is dangerous').

If we try to abstract purely conceptual aspects of moral terms from the network of attitudes and feelings, we inevitably give a distorted picture of moral experience and destroy the bridge between moral judgment and behaviour. Moral problem solving becomes at best a challenging logical game, but then it should not be confused with the judgment making that goes on in the context of moral practice. Whatever we may learn about moral concepts, we have not acquired them as part of a moral practice unless we approve or disapprove of the human characteristics or behaviour to which they apply. One does not employ the word 'lying' as a moral term unless one disapproves of withholding the truth (or saying what is not the case) in order to deceive. Although expressions like 'it is good to be kind', 'murder is wrong', 'one ought to tell the truth' are used during the period of learning and on some other occasions for a rhetorical purpose, they are redundant once the substantive notions have been grasped as part of moral practice. It is not as though we first learn moral terms factually and then add the moral principles later (as we learn a word like 'water' and later acquire scientific knowledge about it).[9] Nor are the associations of attitude or feeling in relation to moral terms the private contingent ones that a word such as 'water' may evoke for an individual. The point I am getting at is brought out clearly by Graham Greene in this passage from *Brighton Rock:*

> The Boy said slowly, leaning out across the rail into the doubtful rain, 'When people do one murder, I've read they sometimes have to do another—to tidy up'. The word murder conveyed no more to him than the words, 'box', 'cellar', 'giraffe'.

If what I have said about the acquisition of moral terms is correct, it seems that moral judgments consist fundamentally in determining how a situation (agent, action, etc.) is to be most appropriately described in these terms. The description has the character of an evaluation: when we agree to describe something in such terms, we also bring to bear our moral approval or disapproval and a range of related feelings. The perfecting of this activity in all its aspects forms a crucial part of moral education. On some occasions, the task of description may be relatively simple. To act in such and such a way is to tell a lie or to break a promise, and there are no complicating circumstances. In these cases we may argue in a deductive form, because we have learnt to express some of our moral beliefs as general principles and they already apply in the situation. As I have suggested, such principles are strictly redundant once we have grasped 'truth telling', 'promise keeping', etc. as moral notions. Much of the time, however, we are faced with situations in which the appropriate description is not obvious. Is withholding the truth in these circumstances to be called a lie? Does my acting towards *A* in this way amount to treating him fairly? Am I justified in thinking of myself or someone else in such and such moral terms? Does taking the life of a foetus constitute murder? What moral description fits the action of this group of workers going on strike, or the policy of a government in relation to, say, unemployment, or the British government planning to sell arms to South Africa, or the United States waging war in Vietnam?

The procedure of describing is a matter neither of deducing conclusions from a general principle nor of simply looking for empirical features. This is not a peculiar characteristic of descriptive-evaluative terms. As Julius Kovesi has pointed out, it is common to a vast range of words: wherever human intentions and purposes settle the distinguishing marks for what count as an object or activity of a particular kind.[10] We wonder whether this object is a chair or, to use one of Kovesi's examples, we describe custard as dirt when it is on a waistcoat but not when it is on a plate. We may speak of rules to be followed here, but they are the ones built into our understanding of the concepts we use. The task of describing in moral terms differs in a significant way from deciding, for example, that this object is a chair. Attitudes and feelings play a necessary part in the former, while they are irrelevant to the latter. In this respect, a moral description of a situation is analogous to an aesthetic one. (Are the metaphors banal? Is the expression sentimental?) In both cases, the form of argument (whether we are reflecting to ourselves or talking to someone else) is persuasive; feelings and attitudes form an integral part of it. Evaluative descriptions are related to knowledge claims about a situation, the conditions that led to it, and the likely consequences of acting in various ways. Sometimes the persuasive argument may consist simply in providing more accurate information. But this level of argument has limited scope in moral inquiry. It is our view of the bare facts and of their relative moral significance that finally matters.

Despite the play of feelings and the lack of mathematical or scientific precision, we can still sensibly argue about the correctness or fittingness of a given moral description. We can also improve our capacities for describing morally (that is, making moral judgments). Under one aspect, it consists in a lifelong process of deepening our understanding of the moral concepts we already in a fashion possess, of modifying or rejecting some of them and adding new ones. Under another aspect, we may speak of it in general as the development of moral insight. To a large extent, this is a matter of giving the kind of detailed attention to human beings in a situation that is itself a practice of the virtues of justice and love. Clearly it also involves the exercise of imagination in a certain way: feeling the stress of a situation or the likely consequences of action from the point of view of other people.[11]

There may be doubt about the extent to which deliberate schooling can promote the habit of moral attention (that is, contribute to the development of moral insight). This is not because such development does not fall, in principle, within the scope of education, but because of the sheer complexity of what is involved. In this respect, however, it differs only in degree from such objectives as promoting critical inquiry in science or the appreciation of music or the writing of good English. In achieving these objectives, there are no simple step-by-step procedures that can be mastered by dint of practice and whose faithful observance guarantees success; and as a consequence there are no clear-cut tests of achievement. But it is a common experience that in these areas good teachers can contribute something. We need not expect them to do any more (or less) in moral education. Provided students are examining questions that morally concern them, a teacher can help them to acquire a habit of moral attention by continually pointing out circumstances that have been overlooked, suggesting alternative evaluative descriptions, making analogies with other situations, and so on. It must also be assumed, however, that the teacher himself has developed moral insight and that he and his students share an adequate range of substantial moral concepts. If the latter condition is not satisfied, the teacher's effort will have to be applied directly to building up their repertoire of moral concepts. The characteristics of acute concrete moral observation of human beings and sympathetic imagination are exhibited in a heightened degree in great novels, plays, and historical biographies (and in films by directors like Bergman, Fellini, Buñuel). These and other forms of art also provide a vicarious enlargement of experience.

The evaluative description of a situation in moral terms does not necessarily settle what should be done. On many occasions it is precisely because of this description that we perceive a conflict of moral values or a dilemma. Whichever way we act, we will have to do something of which we morally disapprove. In some extreme cases, when the moral evil of the alternatives is roughly the same, one may finally decide on the basis of intuition formed from past experience. Usually, however, some considerations about the relative weight to be given to conflicting moral goods will apply. Moral concepts and practices tend to be acquired in a more or less coherent system, and a scale of priorities among moral goods reflects such a system.

How differences among systems might be treated in moral education is too large a topic to discuss adequately in this essay. The topic proliferates to such questions as 'Why act morally?' and 'What is the purpose of morality?' Here I wish only to stress that questions about giving preference to this or that moral good (or to this or that moral system) have to be treated—if they can be at all—in the same way as questions about the appropriate moral description of someone's behaviour. If someone proposes as a principle that, whenever there is a conflict between moral values *x* and *y*, *x* should take precedence, the question is whether one should prefer a moral system in which *x* is related in this way to *y*. Obviously this dispute cannot be settled by appealing to value principles that covertly beg the question in favour of *x* or *y*. Nor is it possible to prove that one system is better than another. The argument has to be an attempt to bring someone to see the facts, however complex and vast they may be, in a different moral way. It is a matter of finding details of agreement, arguing by analogy from these to others in dispute, proposing redescriptions in moral terms of the commonly accepted facts, suggesting experiments of imagination, getting the other person to experience something directly, and so on. The argument may place the moral systems in the context of other value domains and try to show that one fits more harmoniously and consistently than the other. If the disagreement extends to these other domains, the argument will become an effort of persuasion about ways of life. In the end, it may have to be recognized that the differences are ultimate moral ones and cannot be resolved decisively in favour of one of the conflicting systems.

I am inclined to accept the view that questions about the purpose of morality and the reasons for being moral tend to misrepresent the nature of moral experience. If I correctly describe what someone is doing as deceitful, and he asks why he should not be deceitful, I may look for a moral notion he does accept to which being deceitful is related (justice perhaps). This process of challenging moral reasons cannot be continued very far. Relatively soon, I will have to say that this is simply one of the notions that characterizes the practice of morality. At this point he may ask why morality is this sort of thing or why he should act morally. In attempting to answer these questions, I support a modest form of naturalism. While evaluation and description are logically distinct, they are not necessarily independent. One cannot deduce what ought to be from what is, but nevertheless an appeal to what is may provide good reasons for claims about what ought to be. Faced with questions of justification, we do not simply have to shrug our shoulders and say it is a matter of feeling or will or social relativism. What we can be expected to provide is as full an explication of moral concepts and practices as possible and their relationship to distinguishing characteristics and potentialities of human beings (man as a symbol-using animal, capable of rational action, wanting and desiring in certain ways, subject to pain, with limited natural resources, and so on). If human beings were radically different in certain respects from what they are, there would be no moral domain, at least as we know it.[12] But I doubt whether we can follow this chain of inquiry any further (that is, say why man is the sort of being that has morality, language, art, etc.).

The question of why, finally, one should act morally at all seeks a non-moral justification for the practices of morality. If we answer by simply giving a statement of fact in which no valuing is implied, we cannot draw any conclusions about what should be done. If our statement includes a valuing of the facts, we either beg the question by appealing to a moral value or treat morality as an instrument for achieving some other kind of value. In reference to the other value (aesthetic, say) one could still ask why it does not need to be justified by reference to something else. This question is no doubt less likely to arise if we can show that morality contributes to such ends as general material welfare, pleasure, or self-interest. At any rate, I think the effort to justify morality in this way leads to one or other of these conclusions: (a) you should act morally whenever it promotes the valued objective or (b) whatever promotes the valued objective is moral. It is clear that (a) does not justify acting morally, but simply gives a reason for conforming to moral practices when they happen to serve some other value; and (b) is in effect another moral system. In the task of showing why a person should be moral in general or in some particular respect, one can only give as full an explication as possible of the substantive concepts and practices that constitute morality, and in so doing relate them to features and conditions of human life. If, despite this, he does not come to see them as the approvable standards or ideals of human character and action, the attempts to persuade him to accept morality in terms of some other value are self-defeating. (Compare someone for whom art is valuable only because of its therapeutic effects, or as an instrument of propaganda, or as a financial investment.)

When questions such as why one should be moral or should accept this or that moral practice are raised, it often seems to be supposed that morality is fundamentally a private matter, something that is up to the individual to decide for himself. Against this view there are several considerations that should be stressed.

First, like language itself, moral practices are essentially public. It is only by being initiated into some form of moral life that an individual is in a position to make a judgment or hold an opinion about what is moral. Questions of agreement or disagreement on moral issues could not even arise if there were no common background of understanding on what such issues might be like and what would count towards their resolution.

Second, morality is not one of those communal enterprises in which people, according to their inclination, may or may not engage, for it belongs to the very notion of a society that its members would participate in some pattern of common moral practices. Regardless of what an individual may decide, he will inevitably be faced with moral situations. They do not cease to be moral simply because he has willed them to be otherwise. Perhaps there are even some specific moral practices that must necessarily be found in any society. Peter Winch claims that truth telling is one of these.[13] He argues that the institution of language (a system of communication in which true and false statements are distinguished) would not be possible unless it could be assumed that people were committed to meaning what they said. In a society having linguistic and other conventions—that is, any society—moral regard for telling the truth cannot itself be treated as a conventional matter. Winch suggests that integrity in fulfilling social roles (although they differ in detail from one society to another) and some notion of justice may also be necessary moral features of any society.[14]

Third, the range of moral practices in a society and the institutions that give them specific shape set limits on what moral decisions can justifiably, and even intelligibly, be made. It follows from the foregoing comments that the picture of children growing up in a kind of moral vacuum and then deciding for themselves whether or in what way they will be moral involves a practical contradiction. Without being initiated to a certain extent in the ways of a society, children are not capable of making any significant human choices; and any initiation into a human society must entail the acquisition of some moral practices. If Winch's claim about truth telling is correct, then although individuals may justify not telling the truth on particular occasions, they are not free to reject truth telling as a general moral practice. The moral relationship involved here does presuppose the indispensable and universal institution of language. But even in the case of the moral relationships that exist in institutions belonging to a particular cultural tradition or social order, I think the situation is to a large extent the same. Given institutions like the family or private property, certain moral relationships necessarily arise. They are characteristics, not simply consequences, of such institutions. The terms 'parent' (as distinct from 'immediate forebear') and 'child' (as distinct from 'offspring') refer to positions in a moral practice. Regardless of whether the institution of the family might with moral justification be changed, individuals who are now in the positions of parent or child are not justifiably free to decide for themselves whether they will treat the relationship as moral.[15]

It might seem that we are reduced to saying that individuals should accept the moral practices of the social group to which they belong just because these are the prevailing practices. To offset such an impression, I should emphasize the distinction between the conditions that are necessary for making and justifying intelligible claims and the justification of such claims. This distinction applies to beliefs of any kind. I have said that it is necessary to have some measure of common agreement on what ideals and habits of behaviour are moral if people are to talk and argue intelligibly about morality. But this is not the same as providing the reason why such beliefs and practices should be commonly accepted. Nor does it account for the nature of the judgments on which there is agreement. Merely to recognize that a practice is commonly accepted as moral is not to acknowledge it as a moral practice. To do the latter, one must see it as a worthy standard of human conduct; and when this is the ground of acceptance, the moral practice may be invoked even against the actual behaviour of the majority.

Questions about the meaning and justification of moral (or any other) judgments must also be carefully distinguished from attempts to give various explanations (historical, sociological, psychological, etc.) of how this individual or group came to possess these moral beliefs and practices. I may have learnt to appreciate a certain moral virtue mainly through the example of a particular person, but my appreciation of the virtue is not itself a report on the other person's influence. If the institution of language would not be possible without a moral regard for truth telling, it does not follow that this moral regard consists in 'concern to keep the institution of language going'.

Without touching the very complex question of how moral beliefs and habits change, I think two points are clear:

(i) Some practices are recognizably moral only as part of a certain pattern of institutions and traditions. We cannot simply declare that they will be moral in a completely different social context.

(ii) If proposals for reform are to be understood as being moral, they must be related to common notions of morality that are not themselves in dispute.

The conclusions of philosophical inquiry into the concepts and practices of morality are almost always, in effect, proposals for its reform: changes that will make the whole enterprise of morality more intelligible, more systematic and clearly defined, less subject to internal inconsistency and logical imprecision, and so on. Every ethical theory carries at least the germ of a moral system. This is one of the values of such theorizing, for it is the most deliberate and reflective aspect of the complex process by which moral practices are tested and undergo change.

If the mode of reasoning I have been discussing here fairly represents the character of moral inquiry, it is evident that the argument is not primarily a matter of following formal logical rules, nor is it an effort to get someone to argue consistently (depending on a person's principles, one might be grateful if he did not argue consistently). It is directly concerned with our evaluative descriptions in using substantial moral terms. It may be a question of whether this or that concept should be held as a moral one, or whether this is a correct (or adequate) moral description. In either case, the process of description cannot be treated apart from the substantial moral concepts in which it is carried on, or from the conclusion reached; the latter is not something we draw out from the description, but it is what the description amounts to. It is also clear that in this account moral reasoning is a somewhat untidy and inconclusive matter. There can be serious and unresolvable disagreements in moral beliefs and practice and judgments. It is futile, in the hope of reducing this diversity, to distort moral experience by forcing it into a more precise pattern of logic. As Rush Rhees notes:

> In many–perhaps most–questions of morals the decision has to come from me (from the man who faces it); and *whatever the role of reasons, etc., may be, they are never conclusive in the way the steps of a mathematical proof are,* nor in the way in which material evidence of guilt in connection with the crime may be.[16]

We can have good reasons for believing that we have made the correct moral decision, and that those who disagree are wrong. If someone else were in the same circumstances, we would (probably?) try to persuade him to reach the same decision. But in complicated moral questions we can never be sure in the way we can be about a mathematical proof or a scientific explanation.

The limits on the demonstrative character of moral argument apply to both the micro-level and macro-level of debate. Concern for the welfare of human beings is by definition part of what morality is about. But in a specific case it may be extremely difficult to determine what course of action shows due regard for human welfare. The notion of welfare is itself rather vague; there are problems in making comparative judgments about short-term and long-term good or harm; there is the difficulty of weighing the good or harm of one individual or group against another, and so on.

At the macro-level I doubt whether it is always possible, even in principle, to demonstrate that one system or way of life is better than another. Not all virtues and ideals can be realized simultaneously in the one human life. The central characterizing practices of morality are only loosely interconnected, and can thus be accommodated without contradiction or inconsistency into different ways of life. In summary, what I am saying is that moral choices, at whatever level, can and should be reasoned ones, but that there is often a plurality of reasonable choices. In giving an account of moral inquiry, we have to tread a difficult path between arbitrary subjectivism on the one hand and the models of mathematical or scientific proof on the other.

Notes and References

[1] See R.M. Hare, *The Language of Morals*, London: Oxford University Press, 1964.

L. Kohlberg, Stages of moral development as a basis for moral education, In C.M. Beck, B.S. Crittenden, E.V. Sullivan (Eds), *Moral Education: Multi-*

disciplinary Approaches, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971. See also B. Crittenden, The limits of morality as justice in Kohlberg's theory, In D.B. Cochrane, C.M. Hamm, A.C. Kazepides (Eds), *The Domain of Moral Education*, New York: Paulist Press, 1979.

[2] See, e.g. J.S. Bruner, *Towards a Theory of Instruction*, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1968, pp.34, 157–158.

[3] J. Austin, *Philosophical Papers*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961, p.42.

[4] In the long process of being inducted into moral practices, we learn to have various reasons for acting morally. Some of these reasons are, in effect, ways of specifying the worthiness of an action; others are quite extrinsic to it. The latter kind are as varied as fear or punishment and rational self-interest. In the moral decisions of mature people, then, other reasons in addition to specifically moral ones (e.g. doing *x* because it is the just, truthful, compassionate way to act) are often present. They may also be in conflict with the moral reasons. See N. Williams, Children's moral thought, *Moral Education*, 19, 1(2), 4–5.

[5] W.B. Gallie discusses features of the last mentioned pair in his article, Liberal morality and socialist morality, In P. Laslett (Ed.), *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, (First series), Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1956.

[6] H.H. Price develops this point in *Belief: The Gifford Lectures 1960*, New York: Humanities Press, 1970.

[7] See J. Kovesi, *Moral Notions*, New York: Humanities Press, 1967.

[8] See J.O. Urmson, *The Emotive Theory of Ethics*, London: Hutchinson University Library, 1968.

[9] See R.W. Beardsmore, *Moral Reasoning*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969, pp.95–96.

[10] Kovesi, op.cit., Ch.1.

[11] I think Iris Murdoch is correct in emphasizing the importance of the metaphor of vision in morality against the preoccupation of recent behaviourally inclined philosophy with the metaphor of movement *(The Sovereignty of Good*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, Ch.1). Her position basically is this:

> As moral agents we have to try to see justly, to overcome prejudice, to avoid temptation—to control and curb imagination, to direct reflection. Man is not a combination of an impersonal rational thinker and a personal will. He is a unified being who sees, and who desires in accordance with what he sees, and who has some continual slight control over the direction and focus of his vision. (p.40).

[12] See A. MacIntyre, *Against the Self-Images of the Age: Essays on Ideology and Philosophy*, London: Duckworth & Co., 1971, Chs 13–16, and G.J. Warnock, *The Object of Morality*, London: Methuen & Co., 1971, Ch. 2.

[13] P. Winch, *Ethics and Action*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, pp.61–63. (Note, however, Winch's comment in the Introduction, pp.4–5.)

[14] ibid., pp.69–71.

[15] See I.A. Melden, *Rights and Right Conduct*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1959, pp.26, 41, 42, 67.

[16] R. Rhees, *Without Answers*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1969, p.95.

Chapter 8

The Place of Moral Education in the School Curriculum

Should Moral Education Be Included in the Formal Curriculum?

Whether or not schools give a place to moral education in their explicit curriculum, they are inescapably engaged in shaping moral beliefs and conduct. As with any other social institution, the relationship among members of a school are subject both to general moral standards (such as those of truth telling, honesty, justice, respect for persons) and to special moral conditions that arise from the nature of the enterprise (e.g. the duty of teachers to present conflicting arguments fairly). The very ways in which schools are organized, their general styles, vary in their degree of consistency with fundamental moral values and inevitably they reflect and reinforce certain moral values over others.

However the involvement of schools with moral values runs deeper than this. Human beings do not grow spontaneously into moral agents; they do so only through a long process of learning. As they advance during childhood and adolescence towards at least relative moral maturity, they have a particular need for information, advice, criticism, encouragement, and for contact with exemplars of moral maturity. Quite apart from the question of the school's distinctive objectives, it is a social context in which children and adolescents spend a substantial part of their lives under the guidance of a group of adults. In these circumstances, there are many occasions on which the adults must express practical moral judgments on what those in their care say and do. And they cannot avoid being taken as models, good or bad, of what a mature moral agent is supposed to be like.

There is a much more positive link between the work of the school and moral education. Any account of the ideal of an educated person must include at least some reference to the moral quality of life. Hence, whatever is thought to be the precise task of the school, it cannot fulfil its general aim of promoting the ideal of an educated person without also accepting a special responsibility for moral development. As Durkheim has stressed, the school exercises a crucial mediating role between the special and personal moral relationships that characterize the family and the impersonal moral demands of membership in the society at large.

It does not follow, however, from this acknowledgment of the school's responsibility in moral education that the latter should be given a distinct place in the curriculum as a separate subject or even in the context of other subjects. Perhaps the most effective policy would be to concentrate on the quality of those indirect and informal influences that are continually being exercised in a school, whether recognized or not. In following this policy, it would be necessary to ensure that the whole life of the school was conducted in a way that respected fundamental moral standards and reflected a defensible order of moral values, and that the teachers themselves were mature moral agents who had a good understanding of what morality was about and of what was involved in reaching full moral development. While I believe that the indirect and informal influences of the school are important in the making of a good moral person, I shall argue shortly that they do not exhaust its role in moral education and that, in the light of the school's distinctive educational objectives, the formal study of morality in the curriculum can be justified. What I wish to stress at this point is that every school is engaged, whether consciously or unconsciously, in shaping the moral development of its students. Before coming to the specific question of teaching morality as part of the formal curriculum, I wish to comment briefly on two of the general background issues that affect all schools as agents of moral education. It is necessary to comment at this level because relatively few schools at present engage in moral education in any systematic way. In the past few years there has been a growing interest in teaching various procedures of inquiry that directly involve moral and related values—usually in the context of social or general studies. However it is often the case that teachers take part in this work without any special knowledge or skills in the domain of morality and moral education.

Moral Pluralism

A major difficulty for the teaching of morality, or even for the indirect moral influence of the school, is that people seem to differ so sharply on particular moral beliefs and even on the general nature of morality itself. Our society accepts as a basic policy (perhaps a moral one) that differences in morality should be tolerated. How can a school develop an effective program of moral education and at the same time respect moral pluralism?[1]

A satisfactory answer depends, I think, on distinguishing between basic social morality and comprehensive moral systems or ideals of life.[2] The former consists of the moral standards and practices for protecting and promoting general human welfare among the members of a society. Without them, a society—on which individual welfare so crucially depends—could not flourish or even survive and, without them, the conditions would not exist in which people could pursue various more inclusive moral ideals. The basic social morality would include, as a minimum, practices of justice, truth telling and honesty, concern for others at least to the extent of avoiding the infliction of injury, mutual help in satisfying essential physical and cultural needs, and willingness to recognize the moral claims that others make on us on the basis of these practices.[3]

Comprehensive systems of morality include personal as well as social standards of what is thought appropriate for a good human life. They reflect particular interpretations of the relative weight to be given to various moral values and of the nature of the whole domain of morality. There are, in fact, serious differences among groups and individuals in our society at the level of these comprehensive systems of morality. In some respects at least, the differences may express justifiable options or they may be of a kind that cannot in practice be conclusively resolved. These are among the reasons why a policy of pluralism is desirable. The policy does not imply that any one moral system is as good as another or that diversity is necessarily preferable to agreement. It is intended primarily to protect the freedom of people to conduct their lives according to the standards and ideals they believe are most adequate. There is an obvious limitation on such tolerance, namely, that the comprehensive moral systems must be consistent with the practices that make up the basic social morality.

Although schools that are intended to serve the general membership of a morally pluralist society should not take sides in relation to compet-

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ing moral systems or ideals of life, they are clearly justified in advocating the values of the basic social morality. They may also justifiably defend the values on which the policy of pluralism itself is based (e.g. personal freedom, respect for persons, tolerance). Consistent with their task of inducting each generation into the main public modes of thought, they should certainly exhibit and defend the moral values that are integral to the serious quest for knowledge (e.g. honesty, objectivity, impartiality).

The distinction to which I have referred does not completely resolve the problem for the teaching of morality in a pluralist society. The very general values of the core of social morality need to be given substance in particular circumstances. Inevitably the perspective of a comprehensive moral system affects this task. Moreover part of the dispute between these systems is over just what values should be included in the basic social morality. It is also very difficult in practice for teachers, even when they are aware of the distinction, to avoid inculcating disputed moral ideals to which they personally are committed or to present them with appropriate qualifications (i.e. that they are disputed and why). Despite such difficulties, I believe the distinction does form the basis for determining the moral values that the school is clearly justified in defending explicitly and in reflecting through its forms of organization as a social group.

Objectivity and Relativism

The second background topic, clearly related to the first, concerns the objectivity of moral beliefs and judgments and the scope of reason in the practice of morality. It makes an obvious and important difference for the methods of moral education whether, for example, moral beliefs are merely expressions of an individual's feelings or tastes rather than being claims open to rational criticism and justification. Since these conflicting views (and others on the issues of objectivity, relativism, and the nature of moral reasoning) have their supporters, how can the school make any serious move in moral education without infringing the policy of pluralism?

In these introductory comments I shall attempt to offer no more than a few sketchy notes on this question and the complex topic to which it relates.[4] To anticipate a point to which I shall refer later, I assume that among the values that are central to the distinctive role of the school are those of critical rational understanding. In following the commitment it should have to these values, it is clear that the school cannot be required (by the policy of pluralism) to take an impartial view of any theory whatever that happens to be advanced in or about the field of morality. While there are several different accounts of subjectivity and objectivity in morals, I think the balance of argument and evidence clearly favours at least a modified form of the case for objectivity in moral values. (It should be noticed that, while the subjectivist thesis leads to a very diminished role for reason in the practice of morality, as a theory about morality it claims objective validity and offers arguments and evidence that are independent of the feelings and attitudes of its proponents.)

Any version of subjectivism must face the difficulty that moral beliefs and judgments are commonly treated as being fundamentally different from the expression of personal preferences. It is assumed that they can be correct or mistaken, more or less justified: that their truth or justification can be defended and challenged without reference to a particular person's attitudes or desires. One may express feelings and attitudes in making a moral claim; but in the practice of morality there is no confusion between arguments for and against apartheid, for example, and a simple conflict of views on what people happen to like. Many of the moral principles that people hold, particularly the ones they would recognize as part of the basic social morality, are thought to apply to human beings everywhere. These principles are frequently invoked in assessing the moral values and conduct of other individuals and groups. The question of how effectively these values and conduct reflect the preferences of a particular individual or group simply has no moral relevance. Cruelty is morally bad whether a person finds it satisfying or not.

The subjectivist is forced to claim that the common assumption of objectivity has found its way into moral language because of radical mistakes about the nature of moral values. This approach might be defensible if it were a matter of particular errors within the total practice of morality. But the supposed mistake is so pervasive that an effective and uncompromising remedy would entail the replacement of the practice of morality by one of a fundamentally different kind. To illustrate: if we are to speak intelligibly of a person as engaging in morality, he must sometimes make judgments about what is right or wrong in the conduct of other people (and this will include the standards that guide their conduct). Subjectivists no doubt do make judgments of this kind.

However it is difficult to see how they can act consistently in this way. If what is right or wrong is simply an expression of each person's attitudes, it would seem that the only consistent policy is to refrain from making assertions about what other people ought to do and to reduce moral censure merely to the noting of differences in attitude or, at most, to the expression of dislike.

Subjectivists often appeal to moral relativism (the diversity of moral values from one group or society to another) in support of their interpretation. However relativism is itself a shaky foundation on which to rest a theory of morality.[5] In the first place, the actual differences among societies in their moral practices are far less than relativists suppose. An exaggerated picture of diversity is gained from concentrating on the detailed surface features of moral practices: these are often different ways of applying a common underlying moral value. In the second place, diversity of moral beliefs does not entail subjectivism. In some cases, there may be justifiable alternative moral responses to the same complex human situation; in others, the diversity may reflect a better understanding in one society than another of what is justifiable as a moral practice. A society can be mistaken in its interpretation of particular moral principles or of what it accepts among its moral values.[6]

Relativism has commonly been advanced as a ground for non-interference by one group in the practices of another. Apart from the problem of determining what is to count as a morally autonomous group or society, the non-relativist conclusion that everyone should observe a principle of tolerance (or non-interference) is of course inconsistent with relativism.[7] All that a relativist can consistently say about tolerance is that it depends on how it is morally valued by any given group. In any case, this unqualified principle of tolerance has to suppose that there are no justifiable grounds on which the moral values and practices of a group can be criticized from outside and thus no justification for interference. A supporter of the principle is forced to deny that there are at least some moral principles (e.g. relating to racial discrimination, the treatment of prisoners) that apply universally regardless of the point of view taken by particular societies.

In supporting objectivity in moral beliefs and judgments, one is not committed to the metaphysical thesis that moral values exist as properties of objects in the world and can be discerned as such. One may acknowledge that moral values are attributed to objects and actions in a context of relationships. What is crucial is that there are properties of the objects and actions along with facts about human nature and experience that can provide justifying grounds for claims about what is good and right for human beings either generally or in given circumstances. The activity of causing pain for the fun of it does not have an inherent property of moral badness to which one may point in addition to describing the screams of the victim, the laughter of the torturer, and so on. However there are facts about the human experience of pain that give good reasons for treating the wanton inflicting of pain as morally objectionable. It is precisely because the experience of pain is what it is that we pay particular attention to the action of inflicting pain for the fun of it and have terms (e.g. 'cruelty') in which we describe it in a way that also expresses a moral evaluation.[8]

In the light of the foregoing comments, I believe the school is justified in treating moral values as coming within the conditions of objectivity in the sense outlined. This does not simply mean that objective assessments can be made of conflicting decisions, given that there is agreement on a relevant standard (this level of objectivity is not denied by subjectivists); it also means that there are grounds on which the appropriateness of the standards themselves can be tested. In advocating the basic social morality, teachers must be prepared to provide the objective grounds on which its content of standards and practices are justified; and, in the various contexts of moral discussion in the school, they should challenge the supporters of conflicting moral ideals or systems to examine and defend the objective arguments for their position.

If subjectivism (or at least relativism) has been an attractive doctrine for some programs of moral education, others have recently tended to employ an inappropriate model of objectivity.[9] Two general aspects of the issue should be stressed. In the first place, it has been increasingly recognized in recent years that claims about the pure objectivity of scientific inquiry and the sharp division between the domains of fact and value have been seriously exaggerated. Scientific inquiry includes the making of value judgments; there is an inescapable personal element even in scientific knowledge; what one perceives as a fact depends on the concepts and theoretical assumptions one brings to the task of observation, and so on. At the same time, there are important differences in the conditions and nature of objectivity between claims about the physical world and claims in the field of moral or aesthetic values. If moral education is to be effective, it is essential that the distinctive character of objective reasoning about moral problems and values should be respected and that it should not be forced into the scientific or mathematical mould of objectivity.

Justifying Formal Moral Education

Because the school is an institution in which most children and adolescents now spend a large part of their time, it is not surprising that it has come to be used as an agency for a wide variety of objectives. We have already seen that whatever activities a school engages in, it is bound to exercise an important influence on moral development. The question of whether the school should also engage formally and systematically in moral education depends on what is thought to be the school's proper role and what is involved in becoming a mature moral person.

Almost any statement about the distinctive role of the school will raise a controversy. However I believe it can be reasonably claimed that whatever the school may be ultimately trying to achieve (from political revolution to personal adjustment) it should be immediately and centrally concerned with inducting each new generation into public modes of knowledge—both their content and the skills employed in their development and application. While the school may serve various other related (and unrelated) interests in common with a number of institutions, this is the task for which it is uniquely equipped and which is not likely to be done effectively elsewhere in the society if it is not done by the school. I would claim further, without attempting to discuss the issue here, that the school cannot conduct the process of induction properly unless it is committed to the ideal of critical rational understanding to which the quest for knowledge in our cultural tradition is subject. (This claim is discussed in Chapter 3.)

If we turn to the dimensions of moral development, I think R.S. Peters provides a satisfactory general classification.[10] He suggests that there are four aspects: initiation into the practices (including concepts and principles) that distinguish morality (truth telling, promise keeping, dealing honestly, treating fairly, showing kindness, etc.); acquisition of a 'judicial' function: skills and dispositions for applying principles and rules to particular situations; acquisition of an 'executive' function: the dispositions needed for translating decisions into practice (the development of virtues and what is meant by character); acquisition of a 'legislative' function: understanding the ideals and standards of morality and learning how to apply them in modifying and revising particular rules of conduct.

Given that (a) the moral domain has crucial importance in human life, (b) moral development includes the above features, and (c) the distinctive role of the school is as I have described it, it clearly follows that the school is not only justified in including moral education in the formal curriculum, but ought to do so. Consistent with its general purpose, the school's special contribution to moral education would relate to gaining knowledge about morality, understanding the nature of moral ideals and principles, and acquiring the skills for analysing moral issues and reaching sound moral judgments. Learning about morality would include not only some comparative study of moral beliefs and practices but also an examination of the relationship it bears to such basic domains of culture and society as religion, law, government, and art. In this respect, even if moral education is treated as a distinct unit in the curriculum, it is clear that it depends in part at least on an integrated approach.

It would be absurd to suppose that one can develop as a morally good person simply by learning a great deal about morality and by becoming skilful in moral argument. Such knowledge and skill may not even be necessary for living a morally good life (just as people may learn to speak or write well without any explicit knowledge of the theory of language). The informal influence of teachers and the general way in which the life of the school is conducted can probably do more towards this end than the formal study of morality. However I would argue that it is certainly desirable that a morally good person should also understand as much as possible about the nature of the moral domain, see why the principles and standards on which he acts are justified, learn to think carefully and consistently about the moral aspects of complex social questions, appreciate the conflicting points of view on such questions, and so on. In fact, I think it can reasonably be claimed that, in some circumstances at least, the quality of one's life as a moral agent depends on the possession of such skills and understanding.

Although I am arguing that the school plays its distinctive part in moral education by promoting a critical, reflective understanding of moral practice, I have already acknowledged the complex ways in which the school directly shapes the development of children and adolescents as moral persons. We saw also in the earlier discussion that the school is justified in encouraging commitment to the values that form the basic social morality and in fostering the moral attitudes and dispositions on which its practice depends. The best chance that a formal program has of being effective is when the values it defends are clearly reflected in the attitudes and conduct of teachers and in the general life of the school. It is important to remember that in moral education, as in various other aspects of human development, the school does not have the sole, or even prime, responsibility. If it could only succeed in informing moral practice with critical understanding, that would surely be a vast achievement.

For most of human history, the majority of people have accepted morality largely as the expression of an authoritative will (a deity, a charismatic leader, the traditions of the tribe). Whatever defence might be made of this almost completely unreflective morality in various historical conditions, it is evidently incompatible with a social and political order in which each individual has a part in shaping public policy. Aside from the democratic ideal, a predominantly conventional morality is quite inadequate for circumstances in which traditional moral belief are continually subject to public criticism by a substantial minority and the whole practice of morality is being rapidly reshaped. During the past half century there has been, for example, a dramatic transformation in the nature and status of sexual morality, while during the past two decades the rediscovery of social justice has been almost as dramatic. In fact, there has recently been a tendency to identify morality with public issues of justice–immeasurably preferable to the fixation with sex, but a distortion nevertheless. For the quality of their own lives as well as for the common good, there is an urgent need for as many people as possible in our society to gain a thorough understanding of morality in order to apply and modify moral standards intelligently and to participate in the debate both on particular moral issues and on what morality itself is about.

It would be a mistake in the opposite extreme to assume that traditions of moral practice were no longer important or that direct induction into such traditions should play no significant part in moral education. What I wish to emphasize is that the practical and mainly unreflective knowledge, attitudes, dispositions that come with this induction need to be supplemented by a conscious and critical understanding of what the practice involves: a symbolic mastery that gives a person power not only to appreciate the practice in which he has learnt to engage but also to modify it in a rationally defensible way. The school is one of the key settings in which the direct practical induction into morality occurs; but, in its specific task of educating, it is the very place in which the gaining of symbolic mastery over the major practices that make up a culture should at least begin.[11]

Moral Education as a Separate Subject

Granted that moral education should be included in the formal curriculum, the question is whether it should be treated as a separate curriculum subject or as part of one or more existing subjects or as a combination of these two. In any curriculum decision, what can and should finally be done must partly depend on the particular circumstances of each school. During this discussion, I am concerned mainly with general theoretical issues and, in this section, I shall examine some of these issues in relation to moral education as a separate subject.

The main argument for a distinct curriculum unit is implicit in what has already been said. Given that moral development is one of the basic objectives of the school and that there is a complex range of knowledge and skills, related to moral development, that the school can promote, it follows that a separate curriculum area is justifiable. There seem to be two key objections to such an arrangement. First, it is claimed that the nature of morality is radically distorted by being treated as a theoretical compartmentalized field of study (an effect that is aggravated when it is made an examination subject). The basis of the second objection is that 'moral behaviour is the concern and responsibility of every person, not just of a few chosen experts', in fact there are no experts.[12] Hence to treat moral education as a separate subject both mistakenly assumes that there are experts in moral behaviour and also ignores the responsibility that all teachers, regardless of their field of special competence, have for moral education.

The first objection refers to a clear danger in the separate study of morality. However, even though the danger may be more acute in the case of morality, it exists for any study that refers beyond itself to a significant aspect of culture or society (e.g. the arts, government, religion). Engagement in a practice and engagement in the effort to understand the practice are not the same thing. Even when the latter is intended to improve the quality of the practice, it can very easily come to be regarded as an end in itself. To offset this tendency in the study of morality, there are various precautions that can be taken: (a) I have already referred to the importance of consistency between the moral quality of the everyday life of the school and the advocacy of moral principles by teachers. This is crucial when the school undertakes the formal teaching of morality. (b) The separate systematic study of morality can and should be supplemented by the examination of moral questions that arise in the context of other subjects. (I shall return to this point in the next section.) (c) There is no reason why moral education as a distinct subject should not give attention to decisions directly relating to action in the students' own lives whether individually or as a group, and both within the school and outside. (d) The relationship between the understanding of morality (a basic objective of a formal program in the school) and the practice needs to be made explicit, at least occasionally, to ensure that students have an accurate appreciation of the scope and limits of such a program in their own moral development. This list is not exhaustive, but I hope it indicates how the inclusion of moral education as a distinct subject in the curriculum need not result in its being a narrow self-contained intellectual exercise.[13]

In regard to the second objection, it can readily be granted that all teachers should take some responsibility for moral education. But this is in no way incompatible with establishing a distinct unit in the curriculum in which morality is studied systematically. The argument seems to confuse several issues: the personal responsibility we each have for our own moral behaviour; responsibility in relation to the moral behaviour of others; being responsible, whether for our own or other people's moral behaviour, and having expert knowledge and skills related to the practice of morality. Responsibility for our own moral behaviour is clear, but whether we are also to be held in some sense responsible for the moral behaviour of other people depends on special relationships and circumstances. All teachers, as adults acting on behalf of parents and the society, clearly have a responsibility for the moral conduct and development of the children and adolescents in their care. Although the exercise of this responsibility supposes that teachers are themselves mature moral agents, it does not depend on any special expertise in morality. Specifically in their role as teachers, they also have a responsibility to promote the moral development of students (a basic aim of education) in so far as it comes within their field of competence. To perform this task as effectively as possible, they need, in addition to general moral maturity, some special understanding of morality. A teacher of literature, for example, who has no expert knowledge of its relationship to moral values can hardly present literature in a way that is likely to make a distinctive impact on the moral development of students.

The objection we are discussing is unwilling to acknowledge that there can be any experts in morality. While it is true that everyone is required to participate in the practice of morality, this by no means excludes the possibility of experts. It is quite clear that some people live morally better lives than others: in this sense saints might be said to be moral experts. However there is a more precise sense in which we may speak of moral experts. On some occasions at least, moral decisions do depend on a substantial understanding of the nature of morality, on knowing the kinds of information to seek and how to interpret and apply moral criteria in complex cases, and on experience in the examination of moral issues. To possess such knowledge and skill to a significant degree is to be a moral expert.[14] It does not imply that such a person is necessarily morally better than others. What can be claimed, however, is that when other significant conditions are satisfied, the extent to which one is a moral expert makes a difference to the quality of one's moral life. I have argued that a distinct place in the curriculum for the systematic study of morality is justified because there is a range of relevant knowledge and skill in which people can gain proficiency. It is obvious that only someone who has an adequate mastery of such knowledge and skills (as well as the appropriate pedagogical skills) can teach effectively and take responsibility in this aspect of moral education.[15]

Assuming that morality is studied as a separate area in the secondary school curriculum, what would it consist in? There are two main ways in which it could be treated as a unitary subject: by restricting its scope to the philosophical discipline of ethics or by concentrating on the development of appropriate skills of inquiry and decision making through the systematic discussion of moral problems. There are, I believe, some serious difficulties with both these approaches. The effective study of ethics would be too demanding for at least the first three or four years of the secondary school. In any case, ethics cannot be properly treated in isolation from various other aspects of philosophy (e.g. philosophy of action, philosophy of mind, general value theory). The more fundamental objection, however, is that ethics is too specialized and narrow to form an adequate program of moral education. The study of ethics is predominantly a matter of learning about morality; it is only indirectly related to the objective of learning to be moral. This is obvious in the versions of ethical theory that attempt to focus exclusively on the second-order questions (the logic of moral discourse) and to say nothing on the first-order questions about what is good and evil, right and wrong. But even when ethics extends to first-order questions, in so far as it remains a strictly philosophical enterprise, its main focus of attention is on the logical and epistemological characteristics of moral concepts and claims, the nature of moral arguments, and on what is involved in justifying moral practices and systems. When particular moral systems are advocated by ethical theorists, they form part of the moral pluralism of the society and their treatment in the school comes within the proposal made earlier.

The second approach to moral education as a unitary subject–the preoccupation with skills of inquiry and decision making–is altogether too narrow, whether the direct objective is to gain a better intellectual and emotional awareness of one's own moral values or to improve one's ability to think rationally about moral problems (particularly, complex public issues) or to reach a higher level of moral development.[16] In addition to promoting logical skills in moral argument, moral education must also, at the very least, give attention to the content of the values applied in these arguments and the conclusions reached. The identification of the scope of formal moral education with methods of inquiry also puts a disproportionate emphasis on the place of problem solving–or even decisions that require deliberation–in the everyday life of most people. One of the main outcomes of an effective moral education is that we would perceive accurately and easily (often immediately) how we should think, feel, act towards other people in the ordinary circumstances of family, work, etc. that characterize most of our life. Often enough, the main difficulty is not in knowing what one should do but in resisting the counter-inclination to do otherwise. This is one reason why the development of settled dispositions to act in accordance with moral standards (i.e. virtues) must be a fundamental part of moral education. There is also a significant aspect of living morally in which it is not a question of what we ought to do to change a situation but of the attitudes we should take in the face of conditions that we have no power to change (e.g. failure in one's work, ingratitude or disloyalty of one's friends, sickness, death).

Programs designed to develop moral reasoning often treat the process as though it could be fitted exactly to a scientific or mathematical model. In particular, they overlook the fact that a certain range of attitudes and feelings must necessarily be involved if moral concepts are being used in a distinctively moral sense. A person who agrees that an action of his is correctly described as unjust, but does not have an attitude of disapproval towards the action or any feeling of guilt, can hardly be said to employ 'justice' as a concept in the practice of morality. Nevertheless such a person could perform quite effectively in a course on moral issues that was concerned exclusively with criteria of inductive and deductive reasoning and the purely descriptive sense of moral concepts. The point I wish to stress here is that reasoning in moral education cannot be separated from the acquisition of substantive moral concepts and the attitudes and emotions that an adequate understanding of them must include.[17]

The positive conclusion from these comments is that moral education, even when it is given a distinct part in the curriculum (as I believe desirable), needs to be treated as a multidisciplinary subject. Although I have argued that ethics should not form the exclusive or direct object of the program, it is the main discipline on which the program would draw and it provides the most adequate perspective for integrating the various contributing disciplines. Although teachers from several fields would participate, the work of co-ordination and the main responsibility for the program would be with teachers who had a specialized knowledge of ethics and of the theory and practice of moral education. Without implying any particular methods or ways of organizing the content, I think the main elements of such a moral education, to be treated over the years of secondary schooling, are the following:

1 an examination of moral practices and of beliefs about morality in our own society; attention to the extent of agreement and diversity; in this context, consideration of the distinction (discussed earlier in this chapter) between the basic social morality and comprehensive moral systems and ways of life;

2 the content of the basic social morality and how it can be justified, including consideration of what being a moral agent involves, why we should act morally, the role of moral ideals, principles and rules (As I emphasized earlier, it is crucial that the values of the social morality defended in the moral education course should be reflected in the life of the school.);

3 a comparative study of (a) comprehensive moral systems in our own society (there are various dimensions of comparison, e.g. between religious and secular moralities, individualist and collectivist) and (b) moral beliefs and practices of our own society and those of some other

societies and cultures; in relation to these comparative studies and the defence of a core of social morality, an examination of the questions of relativism and objectivity in moral beliefs;

4 the relationship between the moral domain and other significant human practices (e.g. literature and art, religion, law, the political order);

5 the acquisition of skills for reasoned inquiry and judgment on moral questions. The procedure includes the determination of the kinds of information needed in a given case, recognition of the moral values that are or may be involved, the relating of moral criteria and relevant information in order to reach a moral interpretation and evaluation of the case. Although the procedure should be a rational one it is by no means simply a matter of logic. It includes, for example, the ability (and disposition) to engage in honest and accurate self-criticism (at least to be aware of one's biases in a case and to try to adjust for them in reaching a moral judgment), and the exercise of skills of imagination–such as putting ourselves in the position of other people in order to appreciate how they interpret and experience a situation or working out how circumstances can be changed in a way that removes a moral dilemma.

While these skills can be developed in the course of examining large-scale controversial moral questions, they also need to be exercised in relation to the less dramatic moral issues that arise in everyday life. I shall argue shortly that there are other areas of the formal curriculum in which some of the skills required for a morally reflective life may be more effectively acquired than through the systematic discussion of moral problems.

As I mentioned earlier, most recent curriculum materials in moral education have concentrated on learning to reason about moral issues. In relation to this aspect of moral education, I believe the *Humanities Project* and *Lifeline* provide generally sound programs for use or adaptation.[18] They tend to be complementary: the former emphasizes controversial issues in relation to a number of large topics (e.g. war, poverty, work, the family) while the latter concentrates on concern for others in situations that are likely to occur in the everyday life of adolescents.

Although the *Humanities Project* is not concerned with what I take to be the full range of moral education as a distinct part of the curriculum, it is an interesting illustration of how moral education can be conducted as a multidisciplinary study. Despite its title, the Project consists largely of a curriculum program in moral education. Material relating to the discussion of each of its major topics is drawn from literature and the arts (including film), history, religion, and the behavioural sciences. (There seems to be no good reason why appropriate material might not also have been taken from the physical sciences.) In regard to the kind of multidisciplinary study the *Humanities Project* involves, it is clear that the contributing disciplines do not participate *on their own terms* (i.e. through the employment of their distinctive concepts, theories, and modes of inquiry) either to the general understanding of the complex topics (war, the family, etc.) or even to the moral aspects of these topics. Material is taken out of the context of the contributing disciplines (e.g. a passage from a novel) and put at the service of the Project's specific purposes in moral education. The integrating factors are the controversial moral issues in the various topics and the procedures of discussion directed to developing skills of rational judgment on such issues. The 'products' of the disciplines (along with photographs, excerpts from newspapers, etc.) may be integrated in this way, but there is certainly not an integration of disciplines. While materials drawn from the various disciplines may stimulate a more sophisticated level of reflection on moral questions, this is no substitute for a systematic study of these subjects as an education in the humanities. When such study is lacking, there is always the danger that what a social scientist or historian or novelist is saying will be misunderstood.

Moral Education in the Context of Other Subjects

Although I have argued in favour of a distinct place for the study of morality in the formal curriculum, I also wish to stress the important role that other subjects can play in their own right in moral education. Moral issues may arise in any part of the curriculum, but there are some subjects whose content and aims link them essentially with morality. In general, whenever human actions are the objects of interpretation and explanation, the moral dimension (which is so fundamental a part of human action) must be explored. Perhaps the most dramatic examples of such subjects are religion and literature[19], although the central group would also include political education and legal studies. In each of these cases the object of study is a cultural or social institution that is intimately related to the moral domain. Not only do they afford the opportunity of learning to apply moral values but also of gaining a better understanding of their scope and character.

In addition to this, literature and some of the other arts themselves involve distinctive ways of probing and illuminating the nature of morality.

History and the disciplines that make up the social (and behavioural) sciences include moral values among their objects of study and are affected by these values in their concepts and theories. However their relationship to moral education is somewhat more complex than the fields of study I have just mentioned. In so far as they investigate moral beliefs and practices specifically, they contribute to the multidisciplinary subject discussed in the previous section. For the wider topics in which moral values play a significant part, they need the collaboration of ethics, and I shall comment in the next section on this relationship as it affects the curriculum. In the present context, it can be said that history and the social sciences (at least when the latter's level of inquiry is on a substantial scale) exhibit moral beliefs and practices in the large setting of social and cultural movements and in relation to the interaction of institutions. For the kind of contribution to moral education we are considering here, the preoccupation of history with concrete events and the details of biography probably gives it an advantage over the social sciences.

If the study of literature and the other subjects to which I have referred is to assist moral development in distinctive ways, it is crucial in the first place that their unique characteristics should be respected in the process of teaching and learning. The special potentialities of literature and history, for example, in relation to moral education will be lost if they are regarded predominantly as resources from which interesting moral cases can be drawn. A précis of the moral issues in *Macbeth* or *Billy Budd* may effectively stimulate discussion in a program concerned with the analysis of values, but it misses completely the kind of impact on moral understanding that the study of *Macbeth* or *Billy Budd* as literature can have.

It is also essential that the differences as well as the similarities between moral and other values in literature etc. should be clearly grasped by teachers of these subjects. Otherwise, the study of, say, religion or law simply becomes a course in moral education under a misleading name, or else moral questions come to be mistakenly regarded as essentially issues of religion or law.

Before indicating something of what these conditions involve for several particular subjects (religious studies, literature, and social sciences), I should comment briefly on the sense in which moral education in the context of such subjects forms an integrated study. Whatever may be unique to the study of literature, history, law, etc., none of them can be effective unless they draw on the work of several disciplines.[20] Moral aspects may be integrated with these subjects in that ethics is among the disciplines on which they draw. However, in the present context, I wish to emphasize that moral values are also integral to the distinctive content of each and to the distinctive questions that each asks. Because of this, the effective study of any of these subjects must also be, in part, a study of morality. The elaborate efforts at achieving integrated studies often overlook the extent to which individual disciplines, when properly understood, provide a framework for integrating important aspects of experience (e.g. the aesthetic and the moral in the study of literature).[21]

Religious Studies

Regardless of the particular form religious studies may take, there are, I believe, several conditions that need to be met if the subject is to contribute in a distinctive and effective way to moral education.

First, religions should not be treated as though they were virtually nothing more than systems of morality. Their scope includes, for example, the communal celebration of what is thought to be man's relationship with God, a more or less complex pattern of beliefs about the nature of human life and its ultimate purpose that affects a believer's interpretation of every important aspect of experience, and standards of conduct in addition to those of a strictly moral kind.

Secondly, the study should examine the extent to which a religious view of life makes real differences to the practice of morality.

Thirdly, special attention should be given to the role that religious beliefs (in particular, an appeal to the will of God) may play in understanding the nature of moral obligation and in justifying moral practices.

Fourthly, care should be taken to examine the non-religious grounds on which moral beliefs and practices can be justified. When morality is studied in the context of religion, there is the danger that students will come to assume that all morality depends on religious conviction.[22]

The Study of Literature

Many literary works are directly concerned with the moral aspects of human relationships, individuals confronted with moral dilemmas, conflicting moral points of view. The question of how the study of literature contributes to moral education may thus seem to be a straightforward matter. The teacher simply draws on literature as a useful resource: for illustrations of how people in varying circumstances apply a moral principle; for interesting cases on which students can develop their skills of values analysis; perhaps as an instrument of persuasion on behalf of a given value or whole way of life; and so on. This use of literature is particularly likely to occur when several disciplines are integrated in relation to the study of large-scale social and political issues (e.g. war, poverty). As I have noted above, the *Humanities Project* is an example of how literature is used in this way. The materials derived from literature in such programs may serve various objectives of moral education, but this purely instrumental treatment of literature distorts, or at least ignores, its distinctive character as art and the particular nature of its relationship to morality, and as a consequence prevents the study of literature from realizing the unique role it could play in moral education.

There are several respects in which the study of literature (understood as fiction of substantial aesthetic quality) includes the study of moral values and can contribute distinctively to moral education.

In the first place, there are the formal moral qualities displayed in the language in which motives, emotions, and character are described and interpreted. In literary art, the motives and other objects of discussion have to be of sufficient importance to deserve close attention and the author has to employ a form of language that succeeds in treating them seriously, intelligently, sensitively, with due regard to their complexity, etc. These characteristics of an aesthetically appropriate form of language are at the same time the expression of moral qualities.

Secondly, it is a distinguishing mark of great literary artists that they possess extraordinary insight into human character and the complexity of motives and emotions, and can explore them concretely in language of great emotional and imaginative power. This claim must apply, at least in some degree, to all authors of worthwhile literature. It is not that the study of literature presents us, then, with models of how to employ moral principles or directions on the right course of action; its special capacity is to engage our feelings and imagination in a way that leads to a deeper understanding of the moral aspects of character and action—of what we may know in some fashion already.[23] *Anna Karenina,* for example, vividly portrays the workings of the self in human relationships. It illustrates, among its many morally significant features, the defects of unselfishness as well as selfishness, and both the advantages and limitations of being unselfconscious.

To the extent that a work of literature achieves the formal moral qualities of language in examining concrete human experience, it will present, as Iris Murdoch points out, a just and compassionate vision that demands a rejection of selfish fantasy and possessiveness. The study of literature is thus, in part, a training in unsentimental, detached, unselfish, objective attention, a disposition that is obviously relevant to the practice of morality.[24] In the relationship between literature and the development of moral maturity there is a kind of dynamic spiral pattern. While a person's capacity to appreciate a work of literature is limited, at any given time, by his level of moral maturity, the experience of the literary work can itself contribute to an advance in his moral maturity.

Thirdly, in addition to the formal moral qualities and the concrete analysis of the moral complexity of human character and action, literary works also embody substantive moral interpretations. These do not directly affect a work's quality as art. An author may display the formal moral qualities (e.g. sincerity and sensitivity in the treatment of character) while endorsing defective moral judgments and points of view.[25] However, it is part of a full response to literature to assess the beliefs and courses of action that are presented as desirable. When a work fails seriously in this respect, we may need to reconsider whether it really does possess the formal moral characteristics that are an integral part of aesthetic quality. Certainly, we would need to determine in what respect a work that supports an undesirable moral outlook may nevertheless possess aesthetic value.

I would re-emphasize that literature of aesthetic quality is more concerned with examining the patterns of good and evil in human life than in advocating a moral system. In this respect, the exercise of imagination in literature frequently depicts the possibilities of both good and evil beyond the experiences of everyday life. We cannot engage seriously in the study of literature without, to some extent at least, expanding the capacity of our own imagination for envisioning possibilities of individual moral action and the kind of social order that would be morally superior to what we experience. This, and some other points I have tried to make, are well illustrated in Northrop Frye's comment on the blinding of Gloucester in *King Lear*:

> What the imagination suggests is horror, not the paralyzing sickening horror of a real blinding scene, but an exuberant horror, full of the energy of repudiation. This is as powerful a rendering as we can ever get of life as we don't want it.[26]

I have been referring mainly to the moral elements in literature as art. In this context I have mentioned incidentally the special role that the study of literature plays in the education of the emotions and the imagination. Their engagement and development through literature extends well beyond the strictly moral aspects—but these, as we have seen, do have a significant place. In regard to the emotions, an effective study of literature may be expected to develop sensitivity and discernment towards the feelings of others, and a more precise awareness of the range of emotions (e.g. the difference between compassion and sentimentality) and their fittingness in various situations. In regard to the imagination, the reading of literature requires us to enter into many different points of view. Being able to imagine ourselves in the position of others and to have some sense of how they feel is a crucial capacity for a mature moral life. As we have just seen, literature also presents us with possibilities of good and evil and thus provokes us to think imaginatively about particular situations and the general scheme of moral values in our own lives.

There is at least one other way in which the study of literature has a special bearing on moral education: it is the impact of literature on the quality of one's own language and on one's sensitivity to the uses (and abuses) of language in everyday life. To recognize the consequences of this for the moral ideal of freedom one has only to notice the constant pressure of cliché-infected persuasion in advertising or political argument in our society.[27]

To conclude these comments I wish to reiterate the point that literature yields its distinctive outcomes for moral education only to the extent that it is experienced in its character as art. The use of excerpts, summaries and the like in other contexts evidently fails in this respect. The objective of encouraging an enthusiasm for reading literature in order to enjoy (and discuss) the surface story achieves something, but it is only a beginning. The secondary school can and should help students acquire the knowledge and skills for reading literature with an awareness of at least its main dimensions of complexity as art. As well as intensifying the quality of one's enjoyment of literature, such an outcome provides the basis on which the reading of literature can be a lifelong process of informal moral education.

Social Sciences

The precise nature of the relationship that the social sciences (and history)[28] have to moral education depends on how they are interpreted as modes of inquiry. If the assumption that they can be conducted exactly on the model of the natural sciences were correct, they would be useful sources of information, explanatory hypotheses, and theories about morality itself and about matters on which moral decisions need to be made. Because of the crucial role that accurate factual knowledge so often plays in the making of sound moral judgments, this contribution alone would be by no means insignificant. But it would not differ in principle from that of the natural sciences (e.g. knowledge about the effects of radiation, dangers of waste products, conditions under which they can be safely stored, etc. in relation to the question of whether uranium should be mined).

In earlier discussion I took the view that the above assumption is mistaken; that moral values are inescapable constituents in the concepts and theories of the social sciences. In their effort to examine important aspects of human society, they must give attention to moral beliefs because these frequently exercise a critical influence in the decisions people make. This is not simply a matter of describing such beliefs when they happen to be relevant: an action of which moral beliefs form an integral part cannot be properly understood unless the nature and significance of the beliefs are critically evaluated. (Consider, for example, a historical account of the Watergate affair that tried to limit itself simply to describing the participants' moral attitudes.)

It follows that one cannot proceed in the study of any of the social sciences without at least assuming and applying moral values. In some approaches these values extend well beyond the elements of a basic social morality and may constitute a complete ideology or world view. The social sciences provide evidence then, but not in the simple sense of value-free facts which, when coupled with moral principles, lead logically to moral judgments.

If the study of the social sciences is to be a genuine education rather than a more or less subtle form of indoctrination, it is essential that students should have some critical awareness of these disciplinary spectacles through which they view the social and cultural world. An important part of this awareness has to do with the interpretative and evaluative role of moral values in the social sciences and what these values actually are in given cases. They not only affect the interpretation of the facts and the relative weight given to them, but to some extent even what is seen as a fact. At the same time, provided normative beliefs are held critically, the facts can force the revision or abandonment of particular values or even a whole system.[20]

It is obvious, then, that the study of any one of the social sciences (as an educational activity) must, to some extent, include inquiry in the field of ethics—both about the general nature of moral claims and what particular claims can be justified as morally good. The purposes and interests of these disciplines in themselves range substantially beyond the domain of moral values and the objectives of moral education. It would be as much a mistake to suppose they were preoccupied with moral values as to treat them as though they were morally neutral. The general conclusion I would wish to stress in relation to integrated studies in the social sciences is that, whatever pattern they may take, ethics should be included as a contributing discipline.

Just how closely the social sciences are linked with moral education in the curriculum depends in part on the educational objectives. While these objectives cannot ignore the necessary link with morality, they may affect the selection and organization of the curriculum in ways that give moral aspects far greater prominence than they have in the practice of the disciplines themselves. This is clearly the case with social studies (with its emphasis on developing responsible citizens) or with programs constructed around social problems in which moral issues predominate. Even when the main objective consists in learning how to inquire in the mode of the social sciences, the curriculum may concentrate on methods of discussion, argument and decision making, that are thought to be appropriate to the treatment of public moral issues. In other words, integrated curricula that draw on the social sciences (and history) often turn out to be, for the most part, programs in aspects of moral education. Whether this is satisfactory from the viewpoint of moral education depends largely on just what the programs include. I shall illustrate this point shortly in relation to some examples. Whether it is desirable from the viewpoint of education in the social sciences is not within the scope of this discussion—although I think it is fairly obvious that such an approach neglects significant and distinctive contributions, not particularly related to morality, that these disciplines can make to a general education.

In commenting on two curriculum programs in the social sciences, I wish to concentrate on aspects directly related to moral education.

Reference to their characteristics from the perspective of education in the social sciences is intended only in an incidental way. I have in mind the programs in their form as blue-prints for teaching and learning and the outcomes one may reasonably expect simply on the basis of the materials they include and how they are designed. How they are implemented by particular teachers in particular classrooms is another matter (although over a suitable range of cases this is clearly relevant to their assessment as blueprints).

Man: A Course of Study[30] In this very well-designed program, the integrating factors draw the contributing disciplines (anthropology, sociology, and psychology predominant among them) into a unified, systematically-related pattern. The fundamental single theme of the whole program is the study of humanness. This is approached in relation to five major humanizing forces (tool making or technology, language, social organization, education, and cosmology), and a number of key concepts (such as the cycle of life).[31] The basic procedure consists in the use of material (particularly in the form of films) to stimulate the development of a range of inquiry skills. In the process, special emphasis is placed on group discussion. The major objectives of the program are to help students (a) acquire concepts, models, and intellectual skills for thinking about human society and (b) appreciate that all human beings, despite their social and cultural differences, share a common humanity.

The program has a much broader scope than the specifically moral. This is reflected in the report on one large-scale evaluation in what children claimed to have learnt about human behaviour from the course. Apart from various levels of responsibility, they stressed the characteristics of interdependence, persistence, ingenuity, initiative, and capacity for survival.[32] Some aspects of the program, however, are directly concerned with moral values–both in a general way as they form part of the human effort to devise systems of belief, and more specifically in the moral problems that confront the cultural group whose way of life is closely examined (the Netsilik Eskimos). In many other parts of the course (e.g. the relationship between parents and children) there is at least a moral dimension. In practice, moral issues have a more or less significant place depending on the initiative and interest of students in the questions they raise.

The basic theme of the program is crucially related to the nature and justification of morality. If claims about what human beings morally ought to do are to be rationally defended, they must bear some relationship to the characteristics of human nature. However, as everyone knows, what 'is' does not entail what 'ought to be'. If, for example, aggression and xenophobia are universal characteristics of human behaviour, it does not follow that they must be morally justified. As a result of the course, students may gain a better understanding of common features of humanness, but they are not thereby logically committed to the belief that all human beings are to be treated as of equal moral worth. The trouble is that in *Man: A Course of Study* 'humanness' (or its equivalent) seems to be used mainly in a descriptive-explanatory sense. Thus, regardless of whether technology is manifested in the making of a neutron bomb or a harvester, it characterizes and distinguishes human beings. An increased sophistication of technology may enhance humanness (in the descriptive-explanatory sense) yet at the same time produce, in the moral sense, a dehumanizing effect. Any of the humanizing forces examined in *Man: A Course of Study* may be employed in a morally dehumanizing way.

Bruner has proposed three basic questions for the course: What is human about human beings? How did they get that way? How can they be made more so? The second, and perhaps the first, can be answered without confusion if one sticks to the descriptive-explanatory sense of 'humanness'. The third simply cannot be answered in a way that does not mislead unless the moral sense of 'humanness' is taken into account. The complex modes of argument by which this is done and by which the moral criteria may in turn be justified by an appeal to factual claims about human beings are not contained within the descriptive, comparative, analytic, explanatory level of argument and inquiry that characterizes the social sciences. I believe it is a limitation of *Man: A Course of Study* (even in relation to its own purposes) that it does not focus systematically on the justification of moral values and the moral criteria of humanizing practices; in other words, that ethics and its distinctive mode of thought has not been given a significant place among the contributing disciplines. 'Being a moral agent' should, perhaps, have been included among the key distinctive characteristics of humanness that are studied by the course.

Man: A Course of Study seems to be committed to an unstable coalition of universalism and relativism in regard to moral values. As we have seen, one of its basic purposes is to stress the features of a common humanity. Thus, differences between cultures are nevertheless attempts to deal with universal moral problems. If, for example, the Netsilik Eskimos in certain circumstances leave an infant or old person to die, it is their response to a question about priorities for survival that can face any group. I think it is quite justifiable to emphasize that cultural differences in the details of moral practice are often ways of interpreting more general and commonly held moral values. This, however, should not obscure the fact that cultures and even groups within the one society sometimes differ on moral values at the most fundamental level.

But apart from this issue, the program also wishes to encourage the view that acceptable behaviour is a product of one's culture. Assuming that this is intended in a non-trivial sense, it means that all moral differences are to be treated in a culturally relativistic way–the moral values a group holds are right for that group. Despite the contradiction, this no doubt is thought to support a non-relative moral principle of complete tolerance. The underlying theory of the program seems to be that if the members of different cultures are to be regarded as equally human (in a morally significant sense), all their beliefs and practices must be equally acceptable. I have already argued at the beginning of this essay against moral relativism. Differences in moral belief and practice, whether they are superficial or deep, may be morally defensible–but it is also possible that they are not. Students should learn to assess critically the distinctive moral beliefs and practices of their own and other groups; and even when there is consensus, the question of justification still needs to be explored. As I have already indicated, the task of evaluation and justification–so crucial to the intelligent practice of morality–extends beyond the scope of the social sciences.

To come to the acceptance of a common humanity (in a morally relevant sense) and to the tolerance of diversity based on critical understanding is a complex intellectual-emotional attainment. The prevalence of intense prejudice between groups even with in the one society is ample evidence of its difficulty. One must be somewhat sceptical, therefore, about the likelihood of this outcome being achieved by children (or adolescents) formulating their own questions and drawing their own conclusions in response to the materials of *Man: A Course of Study.* They might very well interpret the films on the Netsilik Eskimos as evidence that some human groups are intrinsically inferior to others and as justification for discrimination against outsiders. Teachers can act effectively to prevent or correct these conclusions provided they do not take the supposed openmindedness of the discussion too seriously. But for their own initiative to be justified, they need a very thorough understanding, not only of the social sciences as they are involved in the program, but of moral theory and of the main dimensions of moral development.

The Social Education Materials Project[33] This project does not form a distinct course or curriculum unit. It has been designed strictly as a collection of materials from which teachers can select for use in a wide variety of curriculum contexts. There is no overall plan in the choice of the eight topic areas within which the material is organized (they were chosen for the practical reason that there was a lack of suitable materials in Australia relating to these areas); and apparently no common principles of selection and design are followed in each area. It is not surprising that there is some repetition of topics across areas (e.g. housing, relationship to parents, attitudes to migrants) or that there is arbitrariness in the choice of perspectives from which materials are derived in different areas (e.g. treatment by the media is examined specifically only in relation to the family, and the contribution of art is included only in the unit called urbanism).

The meaning given to 'social education' is not made clear in the Teachers Handbook that accompanies the resource materials. Given the range of subjects from which materials are said to be drawn, it may seem that 'social education' takes in most of the curriculum. However, the materials themselves fit substantially within the scope of topics associated with social studies. Given this relative limitation, the range of interests is still extensive and varied. In relation to moral education specifically (understood to include social as well as personal dimensions) there are many topics in which moral values are either central or play a significant part (e.g. marriage and family, understanding others, poverty, the consumer ethic, treatment of Aborigines, aggression, urban planning, the death toll on the roads). Much of the SEMP material could be used for the purposes of moral education either in a distinct curriculum unit on moral education or in social studies/social science integrated programs of the kind to which I have been referring in this section. SEMP itself is simply a collection of materials for the treatment of various topics. It leaves open (at least for the most part) the fundamental questions about the purposes of moral education, how the materials should be treated in a way that is consistent with these purposes, how ethics is to be related to the contributing disciplines and the materials, and so on.

In its desire to avoid any commitment to theory that would limit its flexibility, SEMP's eclecticism leads it into some inconsistency. I shall refer here to two examples that relate to moral education. In one part of the Handbook the procedures of values analysis and classification are strongly recommended. In another part (under the heading 'Moral Education') the two articles reproduced are based entirely on Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of stages in moral development and its application to moral education. The designers of SEMP do not seem to be aware that Kohlberg himself has strongly criticized values clarification as an approach to moral education (in particular, he contrasts his own non-relativist position with its underlying assumption of ethical relativity). Apart from the inconsistency, it is regrettable that the SEMP Handbook gives such an unqualified endorsement of Kohlberg's own position. The latter has been criticized not only from a psychological point of view (as a footnote indicates), but also by theorists in the fields of ethics and moral education.[34]

The second example refers to the Handbook's comments on group dynamics. This is an approach that the Handbook clearly seems to favour. Among the most characteristic aspects of the approach is the effort to achieve consensus. In fact, in the theory of group dynamics, consensus determines what is true and good for the members of a given group. Yet in relation to the use of discussion groups in the clarification of values, the Handbook states, 'Group consensus is not necessarily a desirable goal'. It may not be for a values clarificationist but it is for an advocate of group dynamics. The general preoccupation with group discussion itself needs to be closely scrutinized for hidden moral assumptions it may include—particularly if it purports to endorse the theory of group dynamics.[35]

It is beyond the scope of the present discussion to examine the moral judgments that are reflected both explicitly and implicitly in the SEMP materials. In using materials of this kind, teachers have a responsibility to be on the alert for moral assumptions and claims about which there can be serious argument. In these cases, they should ensure that students are presented with a fair statement of other points of view.

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In this section my general purpose has been to emphasize that there are many disciplines (in the humanities and social sciences) in which moral values have an essential place. From the point of view of moral education, therefore, each of these disciplines is a field of integrated study. This situation does not occur in the case of mathematics and the natural sciences precisely because moral values play no necessary part in the concepts through which the distinctive questions of these disciplines are expressed and the data of inquiry interpreted. This is far from saying that such disciplines have nothing to do with moral education. Like any other disciplines, one cannot engage in them properly without employing and strengthening certain moral or morally-related virtues (e.g. honesty, humility, respect for evidence) and like any other human activity, they are subject to moral judgments. These may affect what the scientist decides to study; they may have to be made during the course of inquiry in relation to methods of investigation (e.g. experiments on animals, the side effects on the physical environment); and they may arise in relation to the consequences of scientific discovery. (Scientists are not justified in being indifferent to the moral issues that relate to the application of their findings.) Moral questions about the conduct and use of scientific research should certainly be included in the study of science as part of a general education as well as in the preparation of scientists. However, unlike certain moral questions that arise in the study of, say, history and literature, they are not part of the scientific disciplines as such.

Moral Education and the Study of Large-scale Social Topics: Some Concluding Comments

The curriculum programs to which I have referred illustrate, in one way or another, how the treatment of such topics contributes to moral education in a context that draws on a range of disciplines. In this final section I wish to support a version of this kind of approach which has a somewhat different emphasis in relation to both moral education and integrated studies.[36]

Complex social topics (e.g. the family, poverty, war, race relations) are often used as frameworks within which students are introduced to the study of several disciplines while at the same time they are learning how these disciplines relate to one another and are to be applied to questions that go beyond the scope of any one of them (and, perhaps, all of them). It is an understatement to say that this is an extraordinarily difficult task to achieve effectively. If the topics are studied primarily for the sake of understanding, the task is daunting enough; but at least the questions and problems can be selected and defined in such a way that they fall within the scope of a compressed range of disciplines and are of a kind that may effectively introduce students to the main concepts, theories, and methods of each of these disciplines. When the study focuses specifically on social problems and on learning how to make well-founded judgments about what ought to be done (or includes this as a major objective), the complications are much more serious. For example, it is difficult to limit the range of relevant disciplines in a non-arbitrary way; in relation to most disciplines, practical decision making on social issues does not form a sufficiently central theme for gaining an understanding of their distinctive character; practical reasoning contains features that do not come within the scope of discipline-based inquiry.

I shall not discuss in this context the reasons there are for including, in some fashion, the study of complex social topics in the secondary curriculum. However, I assume that one of the key objectives is to enable students to examine and practise the processes of decision making on significant social problems, and that the achievement of this objective is perhaps the main reason why complex social topics (or the problems they generate) should be used as focal points of curriculum integration. When they are used in this way, it follows from what has been said above that it is preferable to concentrate on relating and applying disciplines which, for the most part at least, students have already studied elsewhere in the curriculum, either as separate units or in combinations based on other principles of integration. In this approach any disciplines in the curriculum that are relevant to the topic can be included. It also follows that curriculum units based on complex social topics should be placed relatively late in the secondary school program.

There are several related dimensions in this kind of integrated approach to complex social topics as objects of study. Although the main emphasis is on social problems and the processes of decision making, some understanding of the context in which these problems arise is obviously necessary. The effort to understand significant aspects of society (e.g. family, government, the economic system) is not undertaken simply for the sake of identifying and solving problems; nor are all the problems in these areas of a social kind. It is assumed that much of this more general understanding will have been acquired in a systematic way elsewhere in the curriculum. The task in this course is to apply this understanding selectively to large-scale social problems that in the nature of the case at least impinge on several of the major elements that make up a society. Learning how to employ one's knowledge (concepts, facts, theories) from diverse disciplines or groups of disciplines in order to understand the nature of such problems and, in the process, to gain a better understanding of the disciplines themselves are particular objectives of the course.

Programs designed in relation to social problems are usually preoccupied with helping students learn the skills necessary for making objective, logically coherent judgments on what ought to be done. This includes, in particular, practice in analysing the nature of the problems (the different types of issue they involve, etc.), in applying logical methods of inquiry and rules of argument, in making judgments of what facts, theories, normative criteria are relevant and adequate in each case.

While I believe this should be a fundamental objective of such a program, there are some conditions or qualifications that need to be observed.

(i) The general logical and methodological rules and skills should have been studied systematically elsewhere in the curriculum. The course is preoccupied with learning how to relate and apply these rules and skills in dealing with the diverse facets of complex social problems.

(ii) The main logical features of problem solving or decision making on social questions are the same whether the issues are relatively simple or complex. From a pedagogical point of view, it is obviously desirable that students should already have had experience in learning to make reasoned judgments on issues that are contained within relatively small social groups (e.g. a family, a group of friends, a school, a factory). This experience should include both the making of one's own decisions and the procedures by which conflicting points of view are accounted for in reaching a policy of common action. Large-scale social problems need special attention precisely because the complexity of their content makes judgments about the relevance of facts and criteria so difficult and because the range and diversity of interested individuals and groups requires complicated procedures for resolving conflict.

(iii) The very demanding nature of serious inquiry into large-scale social problems should be recognized. If the citizens of a democracy are to participate responsibly and critically in the life of the society, they need to acquire understanding of, and skill in, the processes by which action on such problems is determined.[37] This does not mean they must necessarily be able to work out an adequate solution for themselves. Some group procedures in the discussion of controversial issues tend to push the participants into defending particular decisions or solutions. A more satisfactory objective for the study of complex social problems is proposed by Broudy and his co-authors: 'The achievement of an intelligent orientation toward them and a disposition to ask the right questions, or at least to recognize the right ones when others ask them'.[38]

As a corollary to the last point, I believe the approach to social problems should not be quite as preoccupied as programs often are with teaching the skills that an individual needs for making reasoned practical judgments. Although the acquisition of these skills is obviously important, it is at least equally desirable that students should understand something of the large-scale processes of practical decision making in our society. Here the interest is focused on the formation of policy that affects the whole society or a substantial section of it, on the nature and limits of rational decision making by both individuals and groups, on the gap between the ideals of such a process and the reality in public policy making, on the different kinds of values that influence decisions, the personality factors, the role of pressure groups and experts, the procedures for achieving consensus or compromise, etc.

Because teachers can hardly claim to be experts in understanding these processes in all their complicated dimensions (or in solving social problems), they should keep the application of the disciplines (in which collectively they can claim some special competence) very clearly in the forefront of the program. The immediate objective is not to learn about a comprehensive range of large-scale social problems or try to find solutions to them, but to learn how to employ the content and methods of the disciplines in understanding, and engaging in, the processes of decision making on these problems. For this reason the course can concentrate on a few significant social topics chosen as examples. The school is not a substitute for the experience of life which inevitably shapes one's judgment of the factors that are relevant in a practical decision. But complex moral and other problems of action depend crucially on the application of systematic knowledge and inquiry, and this is an aspect to which the school has special competence to contribute. One of the general related outcomes should be an awareness of the factors that influence the production and application of knowledge in our society.

From the point of view of moral education, the kind of program we are discussing has several important characteristics.

(i) In concentrating on issues of social rather than personal morality it provides a context for examining crucial differences between the two in regard to deliberation and action (e.g. the question of responsibility, the presence of conflicting moral interpretations).

(ii) In the program, moral perspectives have to be seen in relation to the full range of other value perspectives (e.g. prudent self-interest, economic efficiency, aesthetics, hedonic satisfaction, political stability, etc.) from which situations are identified and treated as problems. In complex social questions, moral values are never the only ones to be taken into account, and often the social problem is not primarily a moral one. These problems provide an excellent context for exploring the relationship between morality and the domains of law, politics, and economics.

(iii) In confronting the diverse ways in which individuals and groups in a society interpret and respond to the moral aspects of social questions, students have to examine more closely the issues of justification in relation both to their own and to other people's moral beliefs, the possibility of viable alternative moral points of view, the exercise of tolerance and its limits. In particular, they need to examine more fully the distinction I mentioned in the first section of this essay between basic social morality and comprehensive moral systems. I assume this distinction would have been introduced much earlier in their formal moral education and that some aspects of the study of ethics would have already been undertaken (e.g. in social studies). If this has not been done, it is necessary to treat them somewhat systematically in this program in order to provide an important part of the conceptual context for normative inquiry into social issues.

The kind of program being considered is only one element in the whole process of moral education—even of what the school can and should do in the formal curriculum. It cannot begin to succeed as a contribution to moral education unless students have already been inducted into an adequate range of moral practices (at least the constituents of basic social morality). This means that they have acquired not only a cerebral grasp of how words like 'honest', 'just', 'fair', 'considerate' are used but also the feelings, attitudes, and dispositions that are associated with their use as part of the practice of morality.

The approach to social problems here suggested not only treats moral values and judgment as one of its key focal points but also includes a substantial pattern of integration. There are several levels at which connections are made: between the content and methods of inquiry from diverse empirical disciplines; between different normative criteria and modes of evaluation; between the systematic knowledge and methods of the disciplines and the non-systematic knowledge and judgment of common-sense experience. But the most ambitious and fundamental level in the program consists in the relating of theoretical knowledge and practical judgment, the broadly empirical and normative domains of inquiry.

Notes and References

[1] I have discussed this question at greater length in B.S. Crittenden, *Form and Content in Moral Education,* Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1972, pp.48–64. See also B. Crittenden, *Bearings in Moral Education: A Critical Review of Recent Work*. Hawthorn, Vic.: ACER, 1978, Ch.8.

[2] For a discussion of this distinction see P.F. Strawson, Social morality and individual ideal, In I.T. Ramsey (Ed.), *Christian Ethics and Contemporary Philosophy,* London: SCM Press Ltd, 1966. J.L. Mackie makes a somewhat similar distinction in *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong,* Harmondsworth, Mx: Penguin Books, 1977, e.g. pp.106–7. As Mackie points out, the basic social morality would be ineffective if individuals were free to decide for themselves what they were going to count as belonging to it. In the nature of the case, it requires common acceptance of a set of standards and practices by the members of a society. It is not clear how Mackie thinks agreement on the core of social morality would be reached. Following Warnock, he relates its content in a general way to the offsetting of limited sympathies. He does suggest that as the boundaries of a social group become more inclusive, the common morality becomes less detailed in its content–but also less flexible. (See Mackie, op.cit., pp.146–8.) In relation to the practice of education, note the position taken by G.J. Warnock in Education and pluralism: what sorts of problems? *Oxford Review of Education*, 1975, 1(2), 93–7.

[3] For a detailed discussion of the elements of basic social morality see G.J. Warnock, *The Object of Morality,* London: Methuen, 1971.

[4] For a good introductory discussion of the issues of subjectivism, relativism and objectivity in the moral domain see B. Williams, *Morality,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972.

[5] For criticisms of relativism see B. Williams, op.cit., pp.34–9; P.H. Hirst, *Moral Education in a Secular Society,* London: University of London Press, 1974, pp.35–43; M. Ginsberg, *On the Diversity of Morals,* London: Mercury Books, 1956, title essay.

[6] It is more plausible to suppose that a society may be mistaken about certain moral practices than to claim as Mackie does (op.cit., p.49) that human beings have been systematically mistaken about the whole nature of morality.

[7] See Williams, op.cit., pp.34–5.

[8] Mackie bases his subjectivism on a rejection of the metaphysical version of moral objectivity. In the positive development of his account of morality, I believe he makes some important concessions to an objective view (one that does not depend on the metaphysical assumption). As we have seen, he agrees that an individual is not free to invent a moral system at will. All the members of a society must at least accept a common core of social morality—and a humane disposition is one of its essential requirements. He also argues that standards can be chosen in a non-arbitrary way and proposes as the foundation of morality 'general human well-being or the flourishing of human life' (Mackie, op.cit., p.193).

[9] The tendency is present to some extent in Fraenkel's 'values analysis' approach. See, for example, J.R. Fraenkel, *Helping Students to Think and to Value: Strategies for Teaching the Social Studies,* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973.

[10] R.S. Peters, *Psychology and Ethical Development,* London: Allen & Unwin, 1974, pp.252–63.

[11] Compare P. Bourdieu and J.C. Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture,* London: Sage Publications, 1977, pp.45–54.

[12] P. McPhail, J.R. Ungoed-Thomas and H. Chapman, *Moral Education in the Secondary School,* London: Longman, 1972, p.155.

[13] Mary Warnock argues against the teaching of morality as a distinct subject because it tends to be a purely theoretical exercise (i.e. discussion) divorced from action. Her main criticisms are directed against John Wilson's proposal for a moral education program exclusively concerned with the methods of rational decision making on moral issues. She rightly points out that this tends to treat morality as though it were like arithmetic, whereas education for moral practice depends much more on the development of appropriate attitudes, emotions, and dispositions to act in certain ways than on skills of reasoning. While Warnock's priorities (stated in this way) may be acceptable, I do not believe they support her conclusion about the inappropriateness of teaching morality as a distinct part of the curriculum. In the first place, the school need not treat the theory of morality in isolation from the practice. In fact, reasoning on moral issues will be distorted unless its practical character is clearly recognized and due weight given to the role of emotions and imagination. Secondly, the relevant theory is far broader than simply methods of decision making on moral issues. Thirdly, the school is not faced with a dichotomous choice between the objectives of learning to live morally and learning about morality. It can, and should, contribute to both. What I have argued is that the school's *most distinctive* role in moral education consists in the development of critical understanding in the practice of morality. See M. Warnock, *Schools of Thought,* London: Faber & Faber, 1977, pp.129–43.

[14] Compare P. Singer, Moral Experts, *Analysis,* 1971–72, **32,** 115–17.

[15] On this question of experts in the teaching of morality, I think there is an analogy with the teaching of language skills. All teachers have some responsi-

bility and competence to help students to develop their capacities in the use of language. However, this does not imply that there are no experts in the field or that there is no need for distinct courses.

[16] For a systematic summary of many recent programs, see D.P. Superka et al., *Values Education Sourcebook: Conceptual Approaches, Materials Analyses, and an Annotated Bibliography,* Boulder, Colorado: Social Science Education Consortium Inc., 1976. Programs referred to in this book are not necessarily intended to be used separately or as the only approach to moral education.

[17] I have examined this point more fully in Chapter 7 of this volume.

[18] Schools Council/Nuffield Foundation, *The Humanities Project,* London: Heinemann Educational, 1970; Schools Council, *Lifeline,* London: Longman, 1972. See discussion of these programs in B. Crittenden, *Bearings in Moral Education,* Ch. 7.

[19] Fundamental, but probably less extensive, connections exist between morality and the arts whose primary medium is not language.

[20] With the exception of mathematics and formal logic, there are no disciplines that can live a strictly monastic life.

[21] This point is emphasized by J. Elliott in The Integration of the curriculum, In I.H. Birnie (Ed.), *Religious Education in Integrated Studies,* London: SCM, 1972.

[22] The Religious Education Syllabus Years 1-12, Education Department of South Australia, 1978 adopts a very broad interpretation of religion: 'A religion is any system of beliefs/practices/experiences through which persons find meaning and purpose for life'. It follows from this definition that most, if not all, moral beliefs are religious. Secular systems, such as Humanism and Marxism, are religions (in the Syllabus's sense of the term). The Syllabus seems to avoid the kind of confusion between morality and religion to which I have referred by distinguishing between traditional religions and other systems in which people find meaning and purpose for life. If attended to carefully, this distinction may be sufficient to avoid the assumption that morality ultimately depends on the will of a transcendent being–and thus the conclusion that 'if God is dead, everything is permitted'. However, I think the picture of the relationships between morality and religion presented by the Syllabus is still not entirely accurate. The moral standards and practices that a person follows may provide at least a minimally adequate guide even though they do not form a system, much less the source of meaning and purpose for life. The question that the Syllabus does not seem to leave open is whether moral beliefs can be followed quite satisfactorily outside a comprehensive system or ideology (or 'religion' in the sense in which the Syllabus uses this term).

[23] R.W. Beardsmore, *Art and Morality,* London: Macmillan, 1971, pp.60–75. The same point is emphasized by Michael Black in *The Literature of Fidelity,* London: Chatto & Windus, 1975, p.15 and well illustrated in his comments on *Anna Karenina,* p.116 seq. to which I refer in the text.

[24] Murdoch, op.cit., p.66.

[25] There is an analogy here to people who are tolerant, fair-minded, well-intentioned and the like, yet act in morally disastrous ways. In the practice of morality such formal qualities are necessary but not sufficient.

[26] N. Frye, *The Educated Imagination,* Toronto: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1963, p.41.

[27] The connection between the study of language and literature and the ideal of freedom is discussed by Northrop Frye, op.cit., p.63 seq.

> The area of ordinary speech, as I see it, is a battleground between two forms of social speech, the speech of a mob and the speech of a free society. One stands for cliché, ready-made idea and automatic babble, and it leads us inevitably from illusion into hysteria. (p.64).

[28] The social sciences include a narrower range of disciplines than social studies. I am assuming here that they are made up of anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, and much of psychology and geography. Although history is a crucial part of social studies and shares common ground with some of the social sciences, I support the view that there are important differences in modes of interpretation and explanation between history and the social sciences. For a discussion of the issues see, for example, W.H. Dray, *Philosophy of History,* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1964, especially Ch.2. See also M. Scriven, The structure of the social sciences, In G.W. Ford and L. Pugno (Eds), *The Structure of Knowledge and the Curriculum,* Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964.

[29] See A. Ryan, *The Philosophy of the Social Sciences,* London: Macmillan, 1970, Ch.10.

[30] For discussions of *Man: A Course of Study* see R.M. Jones, *Fantasy and Feeling in Education,* Harmondsworth, Mx: Penguin Books, 1972, Ch.8; L. Stenhouse, *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development,* London: Heinemann, 1975, p.90 seq.; J.P. Hanley, D. Whitla, E.W. Moo, A. Walter, *Curiosity, Competence, Community–Man: A Course of Study; An Evaluation,* (2 Vols.), Cambridge, Mass.: Education Development Center, 1969, 1970. A section is reproduced in M. Galby, J. Greenwald, R. West (Eds), *Curriculum Design,* London: Croom Helm, 1975. For the outline and rationale of *Man: A Course of Study,* see J.S. Bruner, *Towards a Theory of Instruction,* New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1968, Ch.4.

[31] While the characterizing features of humanness on which *Man: A Course of Study* focuses are, no doubt, fundamental, it should be recognized that the program in its details reflects a particular interpretation. It is thoroughly based on the view of man that one finds expounded in Bruner's various writings. Teachers should be aware that there are different ways of interpreting the nature of language (for example) as a distinguishing characteristic of human beings and they should recognize theoretical assumptions that underlie the material (e.g. a structuralist view of symbolic systems).

[32] Hanley et al., op.cit.

[33] Curriculum Development Centre, *Social Education Materials Project: Resources for Social Education across the Curriculum.* Canberra: CDC, 1977; *Social Education Materials Project: Teachers Handbook and Workshop Leaders Handbook,* (P. Jones, Ed.), Canberra: CDC, 1977.

[34] I have written several critical assessments of Kohlberg from the point of view of ethics and moral education: B. Crittenden, *Form and Content in Moral Education*, Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1972, pp.14–23; Developmental psychology and moral education: A discussion of Lawrence Kohlberg's theory, In J.V. D'Cruz and W. Hannah (Eds), *Perceptions of Excellence: Studies in Educational Theory*, Melbourne: Polding Press, 1979; Developmental theory and moral education, *Victorian Institute of Educational Research Bulletin*, 1974, No. 33, 15–30. See also R.S. Peters, Moral development: A plea for pluralism, In T. Mischel (Ed.), *Cognitive Development and Epistemology*, New York: Academic Press, 1971; A reply to Kohlberg: Why doesn't Kohlberg do his homework? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 1975, **56**(10), p.678; The place of Kohlberg's theory in moral education, *Journal of Moral Education*, 1978, **7**(3), 147–57.

[35] See, for example, A.M. Dupuis, Group dynamics: Some ethical presuppositions, *Harvard Educational Review*, 1957, **27**(5), 210–19; J.J. Schwab, On the corruption of education by psychology, *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 1971, **11**(2), 109–27.

[36] H.S. Broudy, B.O. Smith, J.R. Burnett, *Democracy and Excellence in American Secondary Education*, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1964, pp.231-243, 272-274.

[37] This includes both what actually happens and what the process should be like.

[38] Broudy et al., op.cit., p.243.

Part V: Social Values and the Practice of Education

At a comprehensive level, educational theory and social theory inevitably carry significant consequences for one another. The writings of Plato, Rousseau, and Dewey provide the most famous examples of how such theories interact. Although each perspective represents distinctive values, there is often a temptation, if only for the sake of unity, to subordinate one to the other. For obvious reasons, the distinctiveness of educational values is more likely to be ignored; social reformers too easily assume that the only measure of an educational program's worth is its capacity to advance certain social or political values. During this century we have seen some dramatic examples of how education can be treated in such a utilitarian way. In these schemes, whatever action by the school most effectively serves the new political order is what counts as education. The claim of distinctive educational values in the determination of the school's role in social reform is a fundamental issue in both the chapters of Part V.

The first chapter considers the general question of what initiative by the school in social reform can be justified. Two basic aspects of this question are discussed in the chapter. The first refers to the kind of influence on social reform that is appropriate for the school as an educational institution. (There is a common misconception that the school can and should be used as an instrument of reform for virtually every social ill.) The second aspect is the issue of initiative: not only whether the school can take a leading part in social reform, but whether it may justifiably do so.

The second chapter in this section examines the relationship between equality as a social ideal and the practice of education. During this century it has been in the interests of this ideal (in its various interpretations) more than any other that the school has been used as an instrument of social reform. Three aspects of equality in relation to education are considered: equal opportunity, equality of outcome, and the provision of a common curriculum. It is argued, first, that the principle of equal opportunity has a clear but limited application to the practice of education and, secondly, that, given human realities, equality of treatment and of outcome cannot be defended as educational policies. An argument for a common curriculum is outlined. It is based on the claim to education as a human right.

Chapter 9

The School as an Agent of Social Reform

Introduction

Throughout the history of the west, many social theorists have placed education, or more specifically the institution of the school, as the crucial agent of reform. The earliest most systematic example is Plato. In the modern period, Rousseau and Dewey have probably been the most influential exponents of this view. Since the 17th century, an optimistic faith in education as the source of human perfectibility has permeated our cultural tradition. In their various ways, Locke, Rousseau, Dewey, J.B. Watson, and B.F. Skinner all reflect this tradition. With most theorists of this kind, the quality of education and the general life of the society stand or fall together. If the actual state of society is undesirable, so is the system of education. Thus, although society is to be transformed mainly through the schools, the schools themselves must first be appropriately refashioned.

During the present century we have witnessed some dramatic large-scale programs of social, political and economic change in which the school has been a key instrument. In the totalitarian societies of both the right and the left, the school has not been primarily responsible for effecting the radical change, but it has invariably been recognized as an indispensable means of consolidating the new order brought into existence in other ways; and in every case the whole system of education has been redesigned for this purpose. Despite some recent massive changes of direction, the effort in China to consolidate a new social order is probably the most ambitious of all.

Although the scale of planning has been far less comprehensive in the liberal democracies, much the same confidence in the school as a major instrument of progress prevails. The role of education has been interpreted principally in terms of its contribution to economic development (this seems to be a common feature of industrial societies, regardless of their political organization). Even the school's part in general social reform has been viewed largely from the aspect of social mobility and economic opportunity. Under pressure from the doctrine that education should be geared to present social needs, the school has increasingly become engaged in trying to solve all kinds of specific social problems. Although the popular understanding of the school's reformative role in our society tends to move within these fairly narrow dimensions, it no doubt reflects something of that broader trust in the perfecting power of education mentioned above.

The theories and practices to which I have been referring have been subject to serious criticism from various points of view. Among supporters of reform in and through the school, some challenge the desirability of attempting total reform. There are those who deny that the school should take the lead–assuming that it could–in the transformation of a society. Others deny that it is the proper role of the school to be an instrument for either maintaining or establishing a political-economic order. Some reformers identify the system of schooling as itself one of the root evils and propose to abolish it altogether.

It is obvious that the resolution of these conflicting positions is by no means a purely philosophical matter. There are, however, important philosophical issues embedded in any normative theory about the role of the school in social reform. In the following chapter, I shall comment on the role of the school as an instrument of equality. Here I wish to examine a number of the issues in relation to the general question of whether the school should be, predominantly, a conservative or a reforming agent.

In discussing questions about the reform of the school and its role in social change, I think there are several distinctions that need to be drawn.

(i) The first distinction is between the school as a social institution on the one hand and the process and content of education (or schooling) on the other. It is obvious that in our society the school as an institution (from kindergarten to university) does engage in a wider range of activities than can be included in the process of teaching and learning (even when the latter is interpreted very broadly), and that the school could be used for many other purposes than it serves at present.

(ii) The word 'education' can be applied very widely to all the deliberate efforts that shape an individual's beliefs, attitudes, skills, and practices–not only by school teachers but also by parents, companions, religious leaders, newspaper editors, commentators on radio and television, playwrights and film directors, instructors in business and industry, and so on. While any of these educational activities could be, and often are, included on the agenda of the school, there is a certain range of activities acknowledged in both theory and practice as forming the distinctive educational role of the school; that the effective engagement in these activities is the *raison d'être* of the school as a social institution. In brief, this more precise meaning of 'education', which is synonymous with 'schooling', refers to a systematic initiation into the main forms of understanding–their concepts, principles, theories, procedures–that distinguish a culture and the basic intellectual skills on which they depend.

(iii) The role of the school in social change may be discussed simply in terms of what the school is actually doing or is likely to do or in terms of what it ought to be doing. In the present discussion I am interested primarily in normative arguments, although clearly any detailed prescription for change must start with what the schools are actually doing.

(iv) Finally, it should be noticed that although the objectives of reforming the social order and of perfecting human beings may be closely related, they are by no means identical. Human beings do not necessarily change for the better just because social conditions are improved; and one may claim that education perfects human beings without implying that the social order is thereby changed for the better. It does not follow, however, that education could have a perfecting influence on all the members of a society without adjustments to its general economic and social arrangements and to the institution of the school. Depending on the actual practices of the school, it might also be necessary to effect an educational reform.

Theories about the School as an Agent of Reform

Against the background of these distinctions, I shall begin by examining conflicting theories on the role of the school as an agent for changing the existing pattern of practices and values in a society. These theories are not simply concerned with what the school does or can do, but with what is desirable. They illustrate the problems of authority and initiative in reforming the school or in trying to reform society through the school.

The view that the proper role of the school is conservative, that it should be the instrument of the prevailing social order, is systematically defended by Emile Durkheim.[1] It will be seen, however, that leading advocates of a key reforming role for the school have also tended finally to treat the school as a totally dependent instrument of socialization in the hands of a governing or planning elite. There are two key factors in Durkheim's interpretation of social reality: the collective conscience and the division of labour. The first consists of the beliefs, values, and styles of thought that are shared by the members of the political society as a whole, and in virtue of which it is meaningful to speak of them as forming a single society. The collective conscience is an entity of the psychological and moral order and transcends the individual consciences that make it up. The division of labour is the principle of change. It inevitably produces subgroups, some of whose interests and values are not shared by others in the society as a whole. The scope and content of the collective conscience is changed by the process of the division of labour—although according to Durkheim changes in both the collective conscience and the division of labour are caused ultimately by material forces in the society such as the size and density of population. The content of the collective conscience at any time is what the basic form of organization in the society, its morphology, calls for. If a belief or value is part of the collective conscience, it is necessarily what is true, valid, desirable for the members of the society at that time. Apart from aspects of logic and of speculative knowledge, Durkheim holds a socially relativistic theory of knowledge and value. His ethical theory could be called moral sociologism. People do not always correctly interpret the content of the collective conscience, but Durkheim is confident that specialists in 'the science of moral opinion' (or sociologists) can distinguish between what genuinely belongs and what is spurious.

Within this framework of general social theory, Durkheim interprets the task of the school as being entirely one of socialization. In so far as human beings are rational and attain a developed mental life, they are the products of society. Each individual is formed into a social being by assimilating the concepts, beliefs, sentiments, and practices both of the collective conscience and of various subgroups within the society.

This is the process of education, and the schools exist to carry it on systematically. It is an elaborate act of initiation which, like the ritual of religious initiation, creates in man a new being. But in Durkheim's scheme it is a recreation in the image of one's society:

> The man whom education should realize in us is not the man such as nature has made him, but as the society wishes him to be; and it wishes him such as the internal economy calls for.[2]

In general terms the school serves the needs of the society both for uniformity (by reflecting the content of its collective conscience) and for diversity (by reflecting the specialized interests produced by the division of labour). These two aspects are included in Durkheim's definition of education as:

> the influence exercised by adult generations on those that are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to arouse and to develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual and moral states which are demanded of him by both the political society as a whole and the special milieu for which he is specifically destined.[3]

In relation to the question of deliberate social change, Durkheim believes that 'institutions are neither absolutely plastic nor absolutely resistant to any deliberate modification'.[4] The limits within which deliberate change in the system of education is possible are set by its dependence on other institutions, but ultimately by the impersonal forces that shape the actual state of the society. The duty of the school is to fashion the new generation according to the ideal of man embodied in the collective conscience of the society at the time. For this reason the educational system stands in need of continual reform—the extent depending on the rate of change in the collective conscience—to ensure that it does reflect the currently sanctioned values of the society. Durkheim insists, however, that in this work there is considerable continuity, and that there could never be a question of constructing an entirely new system of education. Speaking of social change generally, he says:

> It is neither possible nor desirable that the present organization collapse in an instant; you will have to live in it and make it live. But for that you must know it. And it is necessary to know it, too, in order to be able to change it. For these creations *ex nihilo* are quite as impossible in the social order as in the physical order. The future is not improvised, one can build only with the materials we have from the past.[5]

But it also follows that because the educational system has moral authority only in so far as it reflects the collective conscience, there can be no justification for ever trying to use the school to impose the values of a different social order (Durkheim thinks that, in any case, it would be impossible for the school to initiate such a transformation). If a society reaches a point where the collective conscience is in serious danger of disintegration—the diagnosis Durkheim himself gave of the basic moral crisis of industrial societies—the educational system is in no position to act as a primary agent of reform, for its moral authority in relation to a group of people presupposes the secure hold of a collective conscience. If there is confusion over the common values of a society, this will inevitably be reflected in the school. Durkheim gives what is perhaps the best summary of his general position when he rejects the possibility that education might be used to change the social conditions responsible for the high rate of suicide. To think otherwise is, he claims:

> to ascribe to education a power it lacks. It is only the image and reflection of a society. It imitates and reproduces the latter in abbreviated form; it does not create it. Education is healthy when peoples themselves are in a healthy state; but it becomes corrupt with them, being unable to modify itself.[6]

During the history of Western civilization, it seems that social and educational theorists have generally taken a more optimistic view than Durkheim of the power of education (or more precisely, the institution of the school) to change the conditions of social life. Although there have always been some dissenters, this optimism certainly prevails at the present time—and has done so for the past two or three hundred years.[7] It has usually been supposed, however, that the school cannot perform the task of reform single-handedly; that changes in other parts of the society must precede, or at least accompany, the activity of the school. More precisely, then, the school is seen as one of the crucial agents of reform. It is interesting to notice how it is thought to play this part in systematic schemes of social reconstruction. I shall look briefly at an ancient example in Plato and a recent one in Karl Mannheim.

In *The Republic*, Plato interprets society as being essentially a psychic reality, a large-scale projection of the psychic structure of the individual. Because of this relationship between individual and society, the general pattern of life in a just society provides the criteria for the personal life and actions of its members. In practice these criteria are expressed in the law; and the law, at least in an ideally just society, is enacted by members of an elite who have achieved the contemplation of wisdom.

In Plato's scheme, education is the way to the realization of the ideally just society. It guides the human ascent through the various levels of knowledge up to the contemplation of the good. Each individual is developed to the level of knowledge of which he is capable and so fitted for the corresponding civic vocation for which he is most suited. By doing this, the educational process simultaneously assures the growth of a truly harmonious and just state.

Like later proponents of reform through education[8], Plato is aware of a practical dilemma facing his plan in the actual conditions of society. On the one hand, education is to produce the citizen types that together constitute the just society. In particular, it is to furnish the members of the elite who by their wise laws delineate the features of such a state. On the other hand, until this elite exists and has enacted wise laws, there is lacking the necessary framework within which education can effectively act. To perfect society one needs the right kind of education, but this can exist only in a society that is already just. Even though the educational system in a more or less unjust society must reflect its weaknesses, Plato is hopeful that the circle can be broken. The very disorder of an unjust society, he thinks, is likely to engender in a few a feeling of resistance, and this dissatisfaction is the beginning of their quest for right order. Thus it is possible for a wise elite to emerge despite the general system of education, and for it to gain political power. This elite can then enact just and wise laws that set the general pattern for life in the society. With these laws as its criteria, the elite reforms the educational system and so the schools become a powerful instrument for social transformation. Plato suggests that the state's supervisor of education should be 'the best of all the citizens' and claims that his position is 'the most important of the highest offices in the state'.[9]

In Plato's theory, then, the institution of education does not initiate a reconstruction of the laws and values of the society, but is a powerful instrument for consolidating a change that has already been introduced by the bearers of political authority and power. Up to a certain point in this process of social change the school acts as an agent of the revolution, then, as the new order gains hold, the school automatically shifts to a conservative function. The unfolding of this pattern is fairly clearly illustrated in many aspects of the Russian system of education since 1917.

Karl Mannheim, my second example of a reconstructive theorist, claims that there are key positions in a complex modern society from which large-scale changes can be generated, and believes that social science can provide the knowledge necessary for effectively achieving a desired social ideal. To describe the role of the school in Mannheim's theory of comprehensive social reform, it is first necessary to notice his analysis of the condition of mass industrialized society.[10] He is convinced that there is a profound crisis, and the key term in his diagnosis is 'disintegration': the decline of traditional group control, the lack of co-ordination among the large-scale associations that have developed in modern society, the loss of a powerful unifying body of beliefs and values, the decline in the prestige and influence of the intellectual and artistic elite, and many other symptoms.

In summarizing his position, Mannheim discerns a predicament both of thought and of general human existence in modern society. The former he identifies under three main aspects: the segmentation of intellectual functions; the process of debunking theories as being the mere expression of group prejudices; the development of techniques and sociological knowledge that now makes possible the manipulation of thought. The predicament of human existence is expressed principally in the tendency towards irrationalism in all spheres of society (manifesting itself, on occasions, in mass hysteria), and the division between the 'general morality' that people in the society as a whole profess and the contradictory moral principles by which they live in various segments of their life ('contextual morality'). On the last point his analysis is very similar to Durkheim's.

In this situation the realistic choice, according to Mannheim, is not between planning and non-planning, but between different kinds of planned society—broadly between authoritarian organization and democratic co-ordination. The latter, which is the alternative Mannheim favours, cannot be achieved without a profound transformation in the typical pattern of individual personality and behaviour. Mannheim does not elaborate on what he calls 'integrative behavior', but he describes it in general as involving tolerance of disagreement, recognition of the limits of one's own experience, co-operation in working out commonly acceptable purposes that then take precedence over one's original objectives.[11] Integrative behaviour, Mannheim stresses, is possible only in a certain kind of social organization: one that lies between the superficial aggregation of a mass society and the undifferentiated communion characteristic of a religious sect or small community.

The planning that will develop this kind of social order and the kind of personality that is characterized by integrative behaviour is seen by Mannheim as a gigantic effort of re-education. He emphasizes that the shaping of attitudes both indirectly through the social environment and directly through formal education or schooling is indispensable in an adequate program of social reconstruction. In Mannheim's plan, the fundamental purpose of the school is to contribute to the development of integrative behaviour, but in order to do this, the school in its present form must itself be reconstructed. Among the general recommendations Mannheim makes are these: the co-ordination of the efforts of the school with those of other institutions in the society; the extension of schooling to provide people of all ages with the basic knowledge necessary for continuous intelligent adjustment to the changing demands of society; an integrated curriculum, with special stress on social studies, designed to help students gain a comprehensive view of contemporary problems; the use of teaching methods that are most likely to promote skills of adaptation in a rapidly changing society; the adjustment of social conditions and methods of schooling in order to ensure equality of educational opportunity for all, but without diluting the quality of education.

Given this kind of reconstruction of the educational system itself, Mannheim sees it as a crucial instrument in the continuous process of democratic planning. Educationists and social workers are among those who hold 'key positions' in the planned society.

> They have the special opportunity of standing at the crossroads where they can gain insight both into the working of the individual psyche and of society. They, more than others, have the power to link up the regeneration of man with the regeneration of society.[12]

The reconstructive role of the school can perhaps best be gauged from its relationship to the planning elite. In Mannheim's scheme, the planners are the intelligentsia: both the administrative elite and those concerned directly with ideas and values, although he often uses the term 'intelligentsia' specifically for the latter. While most people have a limited ideological view of the needs (or good) of the society as a whole, the members of the intelligentsia–particularly when drawn from all strata of society–form the one group that has a relatively complete synthetic view, and thus the one that is valid for the whole society at the time. But the elite itself cannot fulfil its task in a planned democracy unless it is adequately formed, and where necessary reconstructed. In planning for freedom, this requires above all that the leaders be drawn from, and permeate, every class and other aspect of society. Such a result is to be achieved principally through the educational system: by ensuring that it is available equally to all members of the society; by bringing together in each school students of diverse social background; and by counting achievement that reflects personal capacity and effort as the only criterion of selection. Here also there must be corresponding changes in the society generally, but the fundamental and most significant part is to be played by the school. Mannheim does not examine the problem of how a society acquires a properly formed elite before the schools have been reconstructed. He assumes that some schools will produce at least a few leaders of the type that reflects the desirable ideal, even when it is not generally accepted in the society. Given Mannheim's assumption about the possibility of transforming a society from a relatively few key positions, his scheme would probably not require many such leaders in order at least to initiate a profound social change.

At one stage in his writings, Mannheim thought there was no point in asking the question, 'Who shall plan the planners?'. Later he revised this position, partly because the experience of large-scale planning in several countries showed how technology and sociological knowledge could be misused and partly because individual personality came to hold a much more significant place in his social theory. The question of the goals that direct the process of total planning assumed paramount importance. In his last book, *Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning*, Mannheim in effect reconsiders the question of who plan the planners. He finally concludes that the planners are at least morally subject to certain permanent religious-moral archetypes of human behaviour that give substance to the democratic ideal (e.g., brotherly love, mutual help, social justice, freedom, respect for the person). The archetypes are still to be interpreted and applied by the planners to the specific conditions of the society; however, as they are independent of particular historical and social situations, they constitute standards against which the actions of the planners themselves can be critically evaluated. The introduction of these archetypal values is inconsistent with Mannheim's general sociology of knowledge (in which the truth of an idea depends on its function in the inclusive social order at a given time). As I shall argue later, once it is recognized that there are criteria of truth and value not determined by the conditions of a particular society, we can justify an independent critical role for the school, one in which it is not merely the instrument of the political, social, and economic interests of the moment.

To summarize Mannheim's scheme: the school—suitably reconstructed itself by the planning elite—performs an on-going reconstructive function in the society. It is the primary agent through which individuals are drawn from all sections of the society into the elite of merit. And it is through the school that the planners can directly promote the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that they interpret as being required for a planned democracy in the conditions of the society at the time.

Despite the differences over what the school can and should do towards the reconstruction of a society, Durkheim's theory on the one hand and those of Plato and Mannheim on the other share at least one fundamental characteristic. The school is interpreted primarily as an agent of the socio-political order that makes up a state. The criteria of truth and other values to which the school is responsible are either determined by the material and social conditions of the national group (Durkheim) or interpreted by an elite that also exercises central political authority (Plato, Mannheim). Even in Durkheim's case, although the experts in public opinion may determine what is genuinely part of the collective conscience at a given time, the school is in effect an instrument of the state. In other words, whether the school is responding to the existing needs of the society or participating in its transformation, it is cast in an entirely dependent role. In these theories there is no basis on which the school could legitimately challenge the desirability of satisfying this or that social need, or could critically examine the accepted political policies. In each case, it is the philosophical account of knowledge, and in particular the relationship of knowledge to the socio-political order, that is the fundamental stumbling block to even a partly independent status for the practice of education.

The School as an Independent Centre of Liberal Education

In the history of modern education, particularly since the development of universal schooling, the schools have in fact commonly been organized through government departments and regarded as instruments in the service of national political, economic, and social interests. These practices have often been justified on purely pragmatic grounds, but when theoretical support is popularly invoked it usually lacks the refinements and qualifications of the kind of systematic theories to which I have referred. For example, despite the extensive political control (whether central or local) of education that is accepted, there are no rigorous conditions regarding the special competence of those who make the political decisions. Perhaps the main difference is that, in popular theory, no clear limits are placed on what might properly be included in the educational function of the school. In contrast, Plato, Durkheim, and Mannheim (and one could include Rousseau and Dewey who have been particularly subject to crude popularization) would agree that the school serves the society by performing a fairly definite range of activities that are thought to distinguish its educational role from that of other institutions in the society. The popular belief that the school should serve the prevailing needs of the society combined with the belief that it should cater to the interests of each individual has increasingly corroded the school's specialized character. It has come to be a kind of omnibus institution that is expected to provide forms of training previously the task of other institutions, and to substitute for the lack of informal educational experiences in the general life of the society. In effect, the principle seems to be that, if the school can be used to alleviate any social problem or promote any worthy cause, then it should be so used. In the present context, I wish to raise two main objections to this interpretation of the school's role.

First, the practical consequence of the proliferation of functions in the name of schooling is that the school cannot engage effectively in that part of the total education of human beings that historically came to be its distinctive task, and for the performance of which no other agency in the society exists. In the chapter, Characteristics of Quality in Education, I referred to the nature of education in so far as it is particularly associated with the institution of the school. For the sake of brevity I have referred to it as liberal education; that is, initiation into the main forms of thought that distinguish human culture, and the general intellectual skills on which they are based. It is not to be confused with other activities that may be called education: the general process of child rearing, occupational training, the broadening of experience by travel, and so on. I shall assume here that what I have called liberal education has in fact been the special concern of the school, at least as an ideal.

My second objection to the multipurpose character of the school is that it inevitably exposes the school to the pressure and control of a large number of other institutions and interest groups in the society. In trying to serve so many masters, often with conflicting purposes, the school not only becomes confused, but forfeits any possibility of justifying even a limited independence. If, for example, the school is to provide training in the skills required by the economy of the society, it cannot avoid being controlled in this respect by industrial and commercial interests (including trade unions) and ultimately by the decisions of government. In this objection, I am assuming that it is desirable for the school to enjoy some degree of autonomy.

It seems to me, then, that two basic reforms are required for the institution of the school. The second depends upon the first, and both are necessary for the distinctive reforming influence that the school could exercise on the general life of the society.

(i) The schools should concentrate on providing an adequate initiation into the range of activities that constitute liberal education. This task is so complex and varied that in the practical conditions of schooling it is more than enough for the school to be expected to achieve.

(ii) In conducting the work of formal education, the freedom of teachers should be protected against the interference of parents, students, the local community, special interest groups, and political authority at every level. In their specific work as teachers, they should be primarily responsible to the standards of belief and inquiry that distinguish the public traditions of understanding. These general proposals raise many practical and theoretical issues. I shall comment here on only a few of them, giving particular attention to the more theoretical.

To begin with some practical matters: it is evident that if the school adopted a more specific educational role, other arrangements would have to be made for the various additional functions it now performs. Among the basic adjustments that would be needed in the society are the following:

(i) A new form of apprenticeship training would have to be introduced into the industrial system of the society.

(ii) Parents would have to resume far more responsibility for the general moral development of their children. (If it is claimed that many parents are incapable of doing this work, there is no point in expecting the school to take their place. In the practical conditions of schooling, e.g. the limited number of hours, it is simply not possible. Moreover, unless children and adolescents are being morally educated in the more general sense, the special contribution that the school can make to their understanding of the moral domain will be largely frustrated.)

(iii) The broad informal educational influences in the general life of the society would have to be revitalized. Fundamental changes would need to be made, for example, in the physical design of our cities so that people could once again live in a community in which festival, ritual, music, art, and the serious discussion of ideas played an integral and spontaneous part. The attempt to turn the school into a miniature substitute for such a community is ultimately no solution to the real problems and, in the meantime, prevents the school from making its distinctive and indispensable contribution to the intellectual and spiritual strength of the society.

(iv) It would probably be necessary to devise alternative institutions for those who were unable or unwilling to engage in a systematic liberal education. These alternatives might include elements of liberal education, but it would not be their primary concern—and in this they would be clearly distinguished from the school. The school might, of course, be placed physically in the context of a multipurpose institution for children and adolescents. Such an arrangement would be acceptable as long as the *distinctive* role of the school and of teachers was recognized and protected.

One of the basic theoretical questions concerns the justification of the kind of autonomy I have claimed for the school. It can reasonably be argued that the school cannot escape the influence of the specific social, political, economic, and technological conditions of the society, and that it should be responsive to them. Moreover, since schooling affects the public interest, and so much of it is supported by public funds, those who are directly engaged in the practice of education must be accountable to political authority. The partial independence of the school that I am supporting is not incompatible with these assertions as they stand. The points at issue are how the school responds to social needs and under what aspects political authority may legitimately demand an account. Incidentally, as far as the principle of autonomy is concerned, it makes no substantial difference whether the school's master is the central government or the local community.

The case for academic freedom depends, in the first place, on the assumption that the school is given predominantly to the enterprise of initiating students into the range of activities that forms a liberal education. When this is so, schooling does not need to be justified by reference to any further end, and the work of teachers is subject to the standards of rational belief and inquiry that distinguish the public modes of understanding. It is on this basis that one can defend the freedom of teachers from the interference of political authority or of interest groups that want the school to serve non-educational values. The argument would not succeed, however, if the validity and worth of knowledge were determined by social factors as in the theories of Durkheim and Mannheim, or if the only competent interpreters of the ideals of truth, goodness, and beauty were also the political rulers of the society as in Plato's scheme (and, with various modifications, that of Mannheim). Thus, although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to criticize these theories in detail, I should indicate briefly why I think they are mistaken.

One of the main weaknesses of the first position just mentioned is that it confuses questions of explanation in relation to a belief (how it came to be held by this individual or group, the influence it exercised in the life of the society at a certain time, etc.) with questions of its justification and status as knowledge (whether the reasons for holding it are adequate, whether it is true, false, probable, and so on). Even as explanatory accounts, the views we discussed earlier put too much emphasis on the causal influence of material, substructural social forces on knowledge and values, and underplay the influence of knowledge in shaping the material forms of a society. An anomaly in both Durkheim and Mannheim is that, while they stress the determining role of the substructural social conditions, they acknowledge that the actual beliefs and values of the members of a class or society may not be consistent with what these conditions require. In each case, this gap conveniently provides a role for an elite which can authoritatively interpret what the genuine beliefs and values are for the social group at that time.

The major forms of theorizing in which human beings engage are in a state of continual development, and the particular shape they take may be affected by social conditions. Whatever the local circumstances of their origin, the criteria and procedures in each of these forms of theorizing either have come to acquire general human application or at least reflect the achievements of an entire civilization. They are not valid only for this or that society, much less only for particular social groups within a society. Thus they provide a relatively large perspective from which the educational institution can critically evaluate the prevailing practices and fashions of the society.

Even in relation to the moral and aesthetic standards and practices that vary from one society to another (and even if the validity of knowledge generally were relative to a given social order), it does not follow that the political authority should be the final arbiter. Those who exercise political authority never equate it simply with the possession of superior force. They always appeal to legitimacy and moral status. These claims could not be sensibly made if the members of the society did not exist in a pattern of moral relations. And there could not be such a pattern unless there were some commonly shared theories including beliefs about the proper role of the state in relation to other parts of the society. This system of ideas, on which the moral acknowledgment of the state depends, comprises criteria in the light of which the exercise of political authority can be discussed and criticized.[13]

In this context, one of the serious defects of the type of leadership theory we find in Plato and Mannheim should be noticed. There is a crucial difference between the relationship of a bearer of political authority to a civil society and of a scholar to a field of knowledge. The authority of the political leader is a distinct (and often sufficient) ground for accepting decisions of policy intended to promote the public interest, or to provide the material conditions for advancing the common good, or to achieve a fair compromise between competing special interests in the civil society. It is reasonable that in political decisions of this kind–which cannot be clearly settled by appropriate evidence–the members of a society should accept the exercise of authority as binding on their actions, for the survival of any social life at all depends on it. By contrast, questions affecting the methods and results of inquiry in any of the forms of knowledge can never be settled simply by the decision of experts. If the experts commonly accept a certain theory, this creates a presumption in its favour. Whether the theory is adequate or not depends on the strength of the arguments and the evidence.[14] Hence, even if the best scholars of a society formed its government, they would not be justified in exercising their political authority to determine criteria and settle disputed questions in the domains of knowledge.

In arguing for the autonomy of the school and for defining its task in terms of liberal education, I do not wish to imply that the school has no responsibility in relation to the more general personal and moral development of students, or to social and political needs. The crucial question, however, is the aspect under which it is appropriate for the school to contribute to these other objectives. The control of pollution, for example, has become a commonly recognized social need. It is clearly desirable that pollution should be controlled, although it is equally clear that the school is not the appropriate agency for the task. The problem of pollution is a very complex one and depends on several conceptual perspectives for a solution. Thus there is an aspect of the social need to control pollution to which the school can make a distinctively educational contribution: to develop a critical understanding of the scope and nature of the problem.

Assuming that the school were to concentrate on liberal education and were given a large measure of autonomy in this work, what would be its likely social role in terms of a conservative or reconstructive influence? Obviously an answer depends in the first place on how well the school performs its task. In Chapters 3 and 4 I referred to the manner in which the process of liberal education should be conducted. In relation to the question raised, I shall assume that the procedures adopted by schools would be more or less effective in achieving the ideals of liberal education—at least as effective as actual alternatives would be in implementing other ideals.

The role of the school, in the interpretation I am supporting, clearly has a strongly conservative aspect. It has the task of transmitting and defending the inheritance of understandings, beliefs, values, and procedures that constitute human culture as a pattern of meanings—in our case, at least as this pattern has developed in western civilization.[15] Obviously the school cannot take the initiative in advancing the public traditions of understanding. How dramatically they change depends largely on the quality of what is done in scholarship and the arts. In this respect the school is in the role of a follower, and in proportion to the vitality of the culture must be continually adapting.

In relation to the prevailing social, economic, and political practices of the society, the school can exercise a reformative influence, which in the long run could be quite radical. Under the conditions we are assuming, the school is in a position to submit these practices to criticism by applying the standards and methods contained in the public traditions of understanding. On the same basis, it can examine positive alternatives to the current policies of the society. Moreover the whole

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educational effort of the school is centrally concerned with the development of capacities for disciplined critical inquiry and independent judgment. The school is freed from the conformist role it has to play in the 'social adjustment' and 'community service' theories. In these theories it has no justifiable ground on which it can criticize or evaluate. It must simply make sure that everyone fits harmoniously into place in the great social machine, and dutifully adopts the latest social consensus on what the members of the group should believe and how they should behave. In the theory I am defending, the first responsibility of the school is to the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic standards that distinguish the best efforts and achievements of human culture. If we are to speak in terms of social functions, then the finest service the school can render to society is to foster a critical understanding and appreciation of these standards.

The radical ideal in this interpretation of the school is that a liberal education should be available to all citizens.[16] This ideal does not have to be justified by reference to social consequences. We have only to point to the qualities of personal life to which one gains access by being liberally educated. I think it is reasonable to suppose that if a large proportion of citizens were to become liberally educated, the effects on the social and political life of the society would be revolutionary. It would surely make a substantial difference if the majority of people in the society were familiar with the standards of excellence in the main areas of social action; if they could interpret political issues for themselves, or at least assess the opinions of experts; if they could respond with appreciation, sympathy, and informed criticism to the efforts of scholars, artists, moral reformers and so on; if they had the breadth of historical and other conceptual perspectives to avoid either being swept along by an apparently novel movement or reacting with panic; if they were not just mechanically literate (as so many are now) but intelligently literate, and thus no longer easy victims of propaganda from politicians, advertisers, and every variety of pseudo-guru.

If the school is to exercise the reformative influence that this interpretation involves, one of the crucial conditions is that the teachers themselves should possess a thorough liberal and professional education. In the age of mass schooling, it is perhaps unrealistic to suppose that a society can provide anything like the number of highly qualified teachers that would be required. Even if this is not the case, how does a society acquire such educated teachers when the schools themselves first need to be reformed? We are pushed back to the practical dilemma that faced Plato, Rousseau, and others: in order to have good schools, we need to have good educators; but we cannot get good educators unless we already have good schools. Certainly, we cannot assume, as George Counts did, that despite all the weaknesses of the school system and the society generally, the teachers themselves are sufficiently enlightened to engender a complete social transformation.[17] In the foreword Aldous Huxley wrote to *Brave New World* in 1946, he bitterly suggested that we should build a monument on the ruins of one of the cities of Europe or Japan, and inscribe over the entrance in giant letters, 'SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF THE WORLD'S EDUCATORS'. This is the opposite extreme from the optimism of a Counts or a Mannheim.

It seems to me that there is no way in which the circle of inferior schools producing inferior teachers who perpetuate inferior schools can be broken dramatically. It has to be a gradual breakthrough, and it would not be possible unless some outstanding schools still existed or could be established despite the passion for mediocrity, and unless some of those who managed to attain a high quality of education would work for the improvement of the school. If there is any 'key position' in the whole system it is, I think, that of universities in teacher education. Some radical changes in present practice would be required. In general, those engaged in university teaching and research in all the component areas of liberal education would need to take more responsibility for the initial and continuing education of teachers, and the programs of teacher education that universities offer would need to be designed as a closely related pattern of liberal and professional studies. It would be absurd to suppose that we could suddenly perfect teacher education in this or any other way and thus create a great chain reaction of reform that would run through the school and the entire society. In regard to the radical possibilities of a common program of liberal education and the obstacles it faces, one might say (to adapt Buber) that what is realistically looked for is not perfection, but a breakthrough.

Notes and References

[1] See, in particular, E. Durkheim, *Education and Sociology*, Trans. by S.D. Fox, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1956; *Moral Education*, Trans. by E.K. Wilson and H. Schnurer, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1961; *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Trans. by J.W. Swain, London: Allen & Unwin, 1915.

[2] Durkheim, 1956, p.122.

[3] ibid., p.71.

[4] ibid., p.18.

[5] ibid., p.145.

[6] E. Durkheim, *Suicide.* Trans. by J.A. Spaulding and G. Simpson. Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1951, pp.372-373.

[7] Some expressions of confidence in the power of education:

> And I think we may say that of all the men we meet with nine parts of ten are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. It is that which makes the great difference in mankind. J. Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, 1689.

'Education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform.' J. Dewey, *My Pedagogical Creed,* Article 5, 1897.

> The organization of peace devolves more on education than on politics. To secure peace practically, we must envision a human education, psychopedagogy, which affects not one nation but all men on earth . . . Education must become a truly humane service to guide all men to judge the present situation correctly. M. Montessori, in a speech to UNESCO, quoted in J. Ellul, *The Technogical Society,* Trans. by J. Wilkinson, New York: Vintage Books, 1964, p.346.

[8] J.J. Rousseau, for example, asks: 'How can a child be well educated by one who is not well educated himself?' *Emile,* Translated by B. Foxley, London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1911, p.17. In *Theses on Feuerbach,* Marx argues:

> The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men that change circumstances, and that the educator himself needs educating. In L. Feuer (Ed.), *Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels,* New York: Doubleday & Co., 1959, p.244.

See J. Passmore, *The Perfectibility of Man,* London: Duckworth, 1970, Chapter 9.

[9] *The Laws,* VI, 765d-766.

[10] See, in particular, K. Mannheim, *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction,* New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1941; *Freedom, Power and Democratic Planning,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1950.

[11] Mannheim, 1950, p.201.

[12] K. Mannheim, *Diagnosis of our Time,* London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1943, p.94.

[13] See P. Winch, Authority, In A. Quinton (Ed.), *Political Philosophy,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967, pp.98-103, 110.

[14] See Anthony Quinton's defence in Authority and autonomy in knowledge, *Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain,* 1971, 5(2), 201-215.

[15] See M. Oakeshott, Education: the engagement and its frustration, In R.F. Dearden, P.H. Hirst, R.S. Peters (Eds), *Education and the Development of Reason,* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, pp.19-23.

[16] See J. White, The curriculum mongers: Education in reverse, *New Society*, March 1969, p.359 seq.

[17] G.S. Counts, Dare the schools build a new social order? In R. Gross (Ed.), *The Teacher and the Taught*, New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1963. Some critics, such as Arthur Bestor (see Gross, op.cit., p.196), have supposed that Counts takes the provocative question quite literally and is claiming that the school system acting entirely on its own can transform the society of which it is a part. But it is evident from the content of Counts's speech that the title is being used with some rhetorical licence. (The text was originally a speech to the meeting of the Progressive Education Association in 1932.)

Among the beliefs Counts labels as fallacies is the view that the school is an all-powerful educational agency. It should also be noticed that he does not propose that the school should be an agent of direct social and political action. Its reformative influence consists in a twofold educational task: to hold up an ideal picture of social life and to enlist loyalty and enthusiasm for its realization; and to examine critically the present social institutions and practices in the light of this ideal. Where Counts can be criticized, I think, is in his over-optimistic view of teachers. If teachers are to achieve anything like the impact on society that Counts envisages, it seems to me that there must first be radical changes in the quality of their own education—and this is not simply a matter of technical competence, but of general culture.

Chapter 10

Equality and Education

Education and the Principle of Equal Opportunity

The nineteenth century's optimism about the power of formal education to effect social reform has been dampened but by no means extinguished during the course of the present century. The optimism has probably been most persistent in relation to the role of the school in promoting equality. This point of view is very clearly illustrated in the first two reports of the Australian Schools Commission (1975, 1976) and in their forerunner *Schools in Australia* prepared by an Interim Committee and published in 1973.[1] In each of these documents the advancement of equality in schooling, and through schooling, in the general life of the society, is the fundamental concern. Despite the economic difficulties and a change in government, they have significantly influenced the shape of public policy in education. It is useful, therefore, to examine at least some of the issues that arise from the way they interpret equality as an ideal and relate it to the practice of education.

It should be noted in passing that the first report of the Schools Commission sets out its theory on equality in less than four pages (SC, 1975: 2.2–2.10). The second report is somewhat less cryptic: it devotes about eight pages (2.2–2.19) to a more selective and detailed discussion of the position taken in the first Report. But even if we presuppose the nine or so pages on equality in *Schools in Australia,* it still amounts to a rather compressed treatment of so complex a question, especially as the reports of the Schools Commission touch on a number of other important topics in the course of dealing with equality. The running together of rather different notions of equality in all three documents may be due, in part, to brevity, but additionally it may also reflect some theoretical confusion. There have been some important modifications and changes of emphasis on the question of equality and education in each succeeding statement (particularly the most recent). The present discussion assumes, however, that the doctrine set out in *Schools in Australia* has not been changed substantially, and certainly it is clear from the first two reports of the Schools Commission that this is the Commission's own view.

In applying equality as a human value to education and to social life more generally, it is crucial to keep in mind some important differences between advocating, on the one hand, the principle of equal opportunity, and on the other, an ideal of an egalitarian society. The Schools Commission, following the position taken in *Schools in Australia,* has treated these two ways of interpreting equality as though they were facets of the same thing, or at least entirely compatible. This assumption is far from correct.

It is true that even in a thoroughly egalitarian society (e.g. one in which the total of significant human goods enjoyed by each member is the same) there is a place for at least some version of the principle of equal opportunity. The principle comes into play whenever commonly desired goods are in short supply, or are of the kind that presuppose for their possession the attainment of certain qualifications. The principle does not simply reiterate rules of fairness (e.g. that the conditions to be satisfied are indeed relevant or that those who acquire the desired goods do in fact satisfy such conditions). It also requires that, when the reasonable grounds that apply here and now for discriminating among individuals have their origins in arbitrary social arrangements, these arrangements should, as far as possible, be eliminated or offset by the members of the society as a whole.

What must be noticed is that, even when the principle of equal opportunity is interpreted at its full strength, it is thoroughly at home in a social order in which there are vast differences in the goods that members enjoy (particularly, in income and property, social status, and political power). In fact, it is in the so-called free enterprise economic system, informed by liberal, individualistic social theory, that the principle has the fullest scope for application. In the psychology of liberal capitalism, primacy is given to individual competition and to profit as the incentive for encouraging the skills and effort on which the system is thought to depend. Granted, then, that there is a broad scale of financial rewards and that each level is to be occupied by the most deserving individuals judged on the basis of ability and effort in free and open competition, it is obvious that there should be a pervasive concern with equality of opportunity. The principle prescribes that, in so far as it is physically possible and morally permissible, the conditions under which individuals compete for the rewards of the system shall be equal, and thus the rewards shall be distributed in proportion to personal merit.

The actual extent of social manipulation that the principle enjoins depends on what is thought to be physically possible and morally permissible. In liberal-capitalist societies, the scope was greatly enlarged as the nineteenth century assumption that the laws of supply and demand had the character of natural laws came to be abandoned. The degree of enthusiasm for the principle of equal opportunity has also tended to wax or wane depending on the state of the perennial debate over the relative importance of genetic and environmental factors.

The main point to be stressed in the present discussion is that when the principle of equal opportunity is being applied to its fullest extent in the context of a liberal-capitalist society it does nothing in itself to promote a more egalitarian social order. The disparities of wealth, power and prestige remain exactly as they were. The outcome that the principle does promote, when rigorously applied, is a society stratified according to merit rather than on the basis of patronage or hereditary privilege.

From their beginning one of the main purposes of the public systems of education has been the development of a workforce that would meet the needs of an industrial economy. Even when the range of schooling undertaken by most people came to include several years at the secondary level, the occupational purpose tended to overshadow the objectives of a liberal education (i.e. of a broad and integrated intellectual, moral, and aesthetic development). The instrumental way of thinking about education was so entrenched that even purely liberal studies had to be given a market value. We reached the point where, regardless of any real connection between formal education and a particular job, the level of scholastic attainment, or at least the number of years spent at school, generally determined the level of occupational income and prestige to which one would have access. Whether our extended system of formal schooling has much bearing on job efficiency, it has certainly come to play a crucial role in selecting where people are to be placed in the economic hierarchy.

Given this selective role, it is obvious why advocates of equal opportunity within the liberal-capitalist system would concentrate their attention on the school. If, through various forms of social engineering and pedagogic intervention, differences in scholastic outcome can be made to depend mainly on individual ability and effort, then to use such differences for occupational selection ensures that economic and other advantages are apportioned according to merit.

In its discussion of equality, the first report of the Schools Commission (1975:2.4) asserts: 'Schooling is not a race; its major objective is not to identify winners and losers'. This is, however, more the expression of an ideal than an accurate description of the role that schooling has played in our social and economic system. It is precisely because the race for the positions of advantage in the system begins with formal schooling that the advocates of equal opportunity have concentrated so much energy on pre-school remedial programs.

In its most generous interpretation, the principle of equal opportunity as applied within the liberal-capitalist system extends to what the Plowden Report called 'positive discrimination'. In this view the principle is not satisfied even by providing *comparable* conditions of education for everyone (itself an extremely formidable task); it also requires that those who experience serious learning difficulties should receive relatively more financial and pedagogical assistance than others. There are obvious problems in reconciling this interpretation with the central theories of liberal capitalism. Certainly it cannot be taken as advocating a kind of handicapping system so that, through adroitly applied differential treatment, all students, regardless of ability and interest, would be educated to the same extent. What is being assumed, apparently, is that not everyone needs the same pedagogic and other help to realize her/his potential for education. The point and justification of positive discrimination is not, therefore, to promote an equal educational outcome by the end of formal schooling, but to provide the maximum help that is needed, and can be given, to enable all individuals by that time to reach the highest level of educational attainment of which they are capable.

While it is beyond the purpose of this paper to engage in a detailed critical assessment of the principle of equal opportunity as it is applied to education in our kind of social order[2], at least a few summary comments should be made. In favour of the principle, it can be said that it has provoked action that has led to a significant reduction of the gross differences in the conditions under which people were educated.

Moreover, in a society characterized by a substantial range of incomes, it seems preferable that entry to the more lucrative and interesting jobs should depend on personal scholastic merit rather than on some form of privilege involving such factors as family, sex, class, ethnic group, religion. This is not to imply that there are no better alternatives.

On the negative side, it should first be noted that the rhetoric of equal educational opportunity (or equal economic opportunity through education) is somewhat misleading. Even if the external conditions affecting education were the same for everyone, as long as the educational outcome depends on abilities that vary greatly among the participants, it cannot be literally claimed that everyone has an equal chance of reaching, through education, to the highest levels in the social and economic order. To suggest otherwise is like saying that a person in poor health has an equal chance of winning a race against a champion athlete, just because they both compete under exactly the same conditions.

In the second place, even when the principle of equal opportunity is applied in a thoroughly efficient way, it does nothing of itself to change the character of society. If there are inequitable differences of income or a stratum of poverty at the bottom of the social pyramid these remain untouched. What the operation of the principle is designed to affect are the occupants of the various levels of income and power. While particular ethnic groups may no longer be disproportionately represented among the poor, still poverty remains. Those who attempt to achieve social justice through equal educational opportunity not only overestimate the role of the school as an agent of social reform, but tend to divert attention from the need for a direct, and more effective, attack on poverty and related problems.

Finally, the principle as applied to education accepts and reinforces the questionable role that schooling plays in determining one's place in the social and economic hierarchy. More generally, the principle emphasizes almost exclusively the instrumental value of education, its pay-off in socio-economic advantage. In this atmosphere, it is easy to forget that the process of education should be a worthwhile experience in itself and should play a fundamental part in shaping the overall quality of human life. It is not surprising, then, that when the school in difficult economic circumstances fails to be an effective means of job opportunity, there should be widespread scepticism about the value of education.

Egalitarian Modifications of the Equal Opportunity Principle

Until fairly recently even egalitarian-minded reformers were inclined to support equality of educational opportunity as an effective and desirable means for advancing their ideal of social equality. During the past decade or so, many egalitarians have witnessed the limited practical success of efforts at achieving equality of educational opportunity, and have become convinced of the powerlessness of the principle radically to change the liberal-capitalist system. In fact, some have mistakenly assumed that the principle belongs exclusively and essentially to this system, and as such they reject it entirely. Short of an outright rejection of the principle, various reinterpretations have been proposed that are intended to make the principle better serve the ideals of social equality. Two of these reinterpretations in particular deserve some comment. There is an attempt to accommodate at least some aspects of both of them in the reports of the Schools Commission (and *Schools in Australia*).

The first revision claims that the ideal of equal educational opportunity is achieved only when the outcome for each individual is as nearly as possible the same or equivalent. Equality in the initial conditions of schooling and during the process will not do, because it results in an unequal educational outcome and thus inequality of social and economic opportunity. Instead of arguing for the equal right of all to the good we call education, this view supports a radically different claim, namely, the right of all to the same (or equivalent) educational attainment. Failure to give due weight to this difference is one of the main weaknesses in the treatment of equality in the documents under discussion.

Whether the objective of equal educational outcome is defensible or not, it should be emphasized that like the traditional principle of equal educational opportunity, it assumes the connection between schooling and socio-economic opportunity. Its strategy is to neutralize this influence by ensuring that everyone is equally schooled. The practical effect of such a strategy, however, can only be to exacerbate the situation in which an increasing number of people engage in more and more years of formal education while at the same time the scholastic qualifications required for entry to an ever widening range of jobs are continually rising.

A more fundamental point, however, is that the attempt to implement the policy of equal educational outcome (assuming it is taken seriously) encounters severe moral and practical difficulties. The massive social engineering that the application of the policy entails could not avoid violating the ideals of freedom and justice to an extent that would be out of all proportion to the good that may be achieved. It is at least arguable that to educate everyone to the same level, no more no less, is not for the good of a society. As long as the genetically determined differences of ability that are relevant to educational outcome cannot be controlled, the policy itself cannot in the strict sense be implemented.[3] Even in regard to interest and motivation, which may depend largely on environmental conditions, it is practically impossible effectively to control their influence on educational outcomes.

Proponents of the objective of equal educational outcome have not been blind to the practical obstacles. A not uncommon way of attempting to avoid these obstacles is through the use of verbal magic. All activities undertaken in the name of education and at whatever level of achievement are declared to be of equal value. The move is sometimes supported by the claim that each individual determines for himself what is to count as knowledge, so that attempts to assess learning against objective standards of achievement are not only morally objectionable but epistemologically mistaken. Even if this pretence successfully ensured that in relation to schooling everyone competed equally for jobs, it is patently a betrayal of educational values. No one would try to justify such a subterfuge if it were a question of making equal provision for health care or for adequate food and shelter.

The second main reinterpretation of the principle of equal opportunity calls for a social order in which the various sub-groups of the society are proportionately represented at whatever levels the goods of the society (including education) are distributed. One of the main reasons for the recent stress on equal treatment for groups rather than individuals has been the recognition of the political effectiveness of such an emphasis. It also has a certain appeal because it offers individuals who fail an escape from personal responsibility; they can blame their failure on prejudice against their group.

In discussing this view, as it relates specifically to education, the report of the Interim Committee quotes from A. H. Halsey:

> . . . the goal should not be the liberal one of equality of access but equality of outcome for the median member of each identifiable non-educationally defined group, i.e. the *average* woman or negro or proletarian or rural dweller should have the same level of educational attainment as the average male, white, white-collar suburbanite.[4]

The attitude of the report to the objective of equal *average* educational attainment is not entirely clear. It toys with the idea, but is also somewhat critical. The main tendency of the report is, I believe, finally opposed to anything like a strict doctrine of equal educational outcome, whether the units being considered are individuals or groups. In its first report, the Schools Commission (1975 : 2.1) seems to differ from its predecessor in this matter. It introduces the first of its basic themes in this way:

> The first is equality—an emphasis on more equal outcomes from schooling, laying particular stress on social group disparities and attempts to mitigate them, and on social changes and their effects on desired outcomes.

It should be noticed in passing that this group approach to equal outcomes from schooling is not quite consistently or clearly elaborated in the report's subsequent discussion of equality. On some aspects of the matter, the Commission's second report is less ambiguous. In general it focuses attention on improving the educational achievement of individuals rather than of groups. In fact, it speaks of the 'demonstrated incapacity [of education] substantially to alter the relative position of social groups' (SC, 1976 : 2.4). Despite this, the report is still concerned about the education of social groups as such. Thus, it calls for a greater effort to give 'under-achieving social groups' a better chance of success at school (SC, 1976 : 2.19). While the second report explicitly repudiates the objective of equal individual outcomes in education (SC, 1976 : 2.13), it makes no comment on the question as it affects groups.

A number of weaknesses in the attempt to achieve equal average outcome among social groups have been pointed out in a recent article by A.R. Jensen.[5] The attempt is, as Jensen puts it,

> unfortunate for education, not only because the individual is the essential unit of all the factors involved in educability, but because none of the ethnic or social groups in question is sufficiently homogeneous in the characteristics involved in educability to warrant its being treated as the unit for any educational prescription.[6]

Jensen also stresses how mistaken it is to assume that differences in educational outcome can be resolved by concentrating on social and economic factors, for there are roughly the same individual differences of scholastic performance and income among siblings as among different social classes and races.

In relation to the practice of 'reverse discrimination' in which social group quotas govern the process of selection, Jensen raises several criticisms: there is the problem of deciding what groups are to be included, and where to place the quota; for applicants who are near the selection cut-off point, the use of group quotas frequently leads to the rejection of better qualified individuals from one group in favour of less qualified individuals from another; the very highly qualified members of groups protected by a quota tend to be seen as beneficiaries of the quota system rather than in terms of their personal merit.[7]

I do not wish to suggest that the general aim of ensuring the same average educational attainment among non-educationally defined groups is objectionable. (The aim would not satisfy a strict egalitarian. Even a less demanding supporter of equality could claim that averages may disguise serious inequalities among groups so that the aim should really be something like the same pattern of distribution over the whole scale of educational attainment.) What I would claim is that there are serious practical difficulties in trying to achieve the objective and that its implications for educational practice are far from clear.

Summary: Assessing the Place of Equality in Education

In the present century schooling has been valued mainly as an instrument in the service of political, economic, and social ends. These ends have been significantly shaped by a widespread commitment to equality as a social ideal–interpreted by some as actual equality in the total goods of life and by others as equality of opportunity. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that schooling should have been so influenced by the social ideal of equality. From what has already been said, it will be clear that I believe the concern for issues of social equality in and through schooling has played an altogether disproportionate part in educational theory and practice. It has reinforced the purely instrumental approach to education and the often artificial connection between schooling and economic status, and has distracted attention from questions about the specifically educational quality of what schools achieve as distinct from their usefulness as social levellers or escalators (depending on how one interprets equality).

Historically, the ideal of equality has been applied to education mainly in relation to the principle of equal opportunity. There is, I believe, a clear, if modest, place for this principle in the conduct of education. It can justifiably be argued that where two people are equal in characteristics that are relevant to the attainment of what is judged to be a generally desirable level of education, they should have equivalent opportunities for achieving such an education. Whether the effort to offset various kinds of obstacles to education can, or should, be justified in terms of equal opportunity is more doubtful.

On the question of equality of treatment as a general policy in the practice of education, there is no serious argument at the present time. Everyone acknowledges that, in relation to learning, human beings are in fact unequal in their capacities, interests, and motivation. To treat everyone in the same way would only exacerbate the differences. Proponents of equal educational outcome have for a long time been strong supporters of unequal treatment in the process.

The case against equality of outcome seems almost as obvious–not only for individuals, but for average group performance unless the criteria of 'non-educationally' defined groups are rigorously determined. If the program were to be taken seriously, it would first be necessary for every child to be made a ward of the state at birth and to be raised under identical conditions.[8] Even when all the controllable environmental factors have been accounted for, human beings remain unequal in their capacities for educational attainment. Thus an equal outcome could not be achieved without seriously compromising principles of justice and freedom. In any scheme of this kind, there are also the evident questions about who the social engineers are to be, how they gain access to their position, what controls they are subject to. Apart from the totalitarian character of the political system, there would be a serious loss to the culture as a whole. If the objective were effectively achieved, the standard of intellectual, aesthetic, and moral excellence would at best be what a majority of people in the society could, through various kinds of educational effort, be brought to achieve.

The inappropriateness of aiming at equality of outcome is particularly clear when one reflects on the nature of education as a human good. In contrast to food and clothing, property, wages, annual leave, and even aspects of health care, education is not like a simple product that can be neatly packaged and distributed. As an achievement, it is a highly complex and intangible set of goods–beliefs, attitudes, ways of thinking, acting, feeling, imagining. It is never possessed once and for all, and it admits of an enormous range of possible levels of attainment with virtually no upper limit. In particular, it is not the kind of good that one person can bestow on another, treated as a passive recipient. However helpful pedagogic intervention may be, education depends directly and finally on each individual's efforts at understanding and on the extent to which these are successful. It is a moral ideal of teaching to use whatever knowledge and skills one has in order to enable each individual learner to achieve the fullest understanding of which he or she is capable at the time.

In summary, whatever interpretation is placed on equality as a social ideal, it seems to have only marginal bearing on the practice and objectives of education.

Aspects of Equality in the Human Right to Education

There is a rather different question about equality and education from the kind we are considering, one which is often obscured, or at least confused, by a preoccupation with the school as an instrument of social equality. It is the question of whether there should be a common curriculum, whether everyone should have access to a liberal or general education that is the *same* in its objectives and the main features of its content. This question leads into a large and complex topic on which comment is necessary to the extent that it is related to another way in which the moral ideal of equality has bearing on education.

If we assume that everyone has a human right to education, we are granting that everyone has, in some sense, an equal claim to acquire the good we call education.[9] We are also asserting in effect that what we call education is necessary for the welfare of each human being as such. Thus, more specifically, the right is a moral claim on the group of human beings that make up a society (and perhaps ultimately on the whole human community) to do what it can to ensure that each of its members becomes educated. Given the characteristics of education that were noted above, this moral claim is still a very obscure one. Apart from the babel of conflicting opinions on precisely what the good called 'education' consists in, there is the obvious problem of different natural capacities for learning. Do we mean that each person makes a moral claim to obtain the fullest education of which he is capable? Or, if we focus literally on equality, are we to say that the moral claim extends only to the level of education that the least capable members of society can attain? A middle ground between these extremes can, however, be justified, and it is here that the question of a common curriculum enters the picture. The present analysis does not attempt to fill out the details of the argument, but merely sketches its main outlines.

(i) In the transmission of the whole culture of a society from one generation to another, education (in the sense associated with schooling, has a relatively specific role to play. Its proper function is limited not simply to those aspects of the whole culture that are worth preserving but, among them, to those whose acquisition depends on, or at least is facilitated by, a deliberate and sustained program of teaching and learning. There are many worthwhile aspects of a culture that can be acquired just as well, or better, through direct experience in various social practices, for example, as a member of a family or other close-knit group, at work, at play, or through religious and other celebrations.

(ii) The content that satisfies the foregoing conditions has often been called the 'high' culture. It is that part of the total way of life of a people that is systematically and self-consciously developed in the light of rigorous standards of excellence. At its core are those activities that attempt to embody and express the highest intellectual, moral and aesthetic ideals. This form of culture is (to use Raymond Williams's phrase) documented in a 'body of intellectual and imaginative work'.[10] It is the central business of education as schooling to introduce each generation to this body of work as a living tradition. Not all societies have realized a high culture in this sense of the term. Among those that have done so, the ideals and achievements have varied in quality, both between and within cultural traditions. Broadly speaking, the tendency in high culture is towards universality, towards the standards of truth, rationality, objectivity, and moral and aesthetic excellence that apply to *all* human beings. In Arnold's well-known phrase, the concern is with 'the best that has been thought and said in the world'.

(iii) The high culture is to be distinguished from other manifestations of culture that may form part of the whole way of life of a society. In particular, it is unlike 'mass' culture in which the emphasis is on entertainment, escape, the thoroughly predictable response that has been drained of any serious mental effort. It is also unlike 'folk' culture which is largely unselfconscious and integrated into the entire fabric of the life of those who participate. Obviously, the high culture affects, and is affected by, such other forms. The high culture must also be distinguished from the characterizing values of the so-called social classes, assuming that such groups can be distinguished independently on criteria of birth or income. It is true that the high culture has often been the preserve of a privileged class, has often been valued more by one class than another, and has often borne the unmistakable influence of this or that particular class. Of itself the high culture is the inheritance of all the members of a society because it is concerned with the standards of general human excellence in the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic domains. It is precisely in this sense that it is a common culture and provides the substance of a common curriculum. The sense of 'common' is qualitative not quantitative; thus it is not what the culture of the majority actually is or what remainder of beliefs and values the members of a society happen to share when all their differences have been subtracted.

(iv) To become acquainted with the content of the high culture in this sense is evidently worthwhile. Whether it should be the object of a human right is perhaps less clear. Can it be said that each individual's welfare as a human being depends on it? An argument for an affirmative answer can be set out in general terms as follows. The development of a distinctly human character depends on learning the main symbolic systems of a culture. These systems provide different ways of describing, explaining, interpreting, and appreciating the human and physical world. To the extent that an individual is ignorant of any of these systems, he is thus limited as a human being. Hence all members of a society need to be adequately initiated into each of the main symbolic systems. This condition cannot be satisfied unless it includes at least a general introduction to the content of the high culture, for the latter is the conscious development of these main symbolic systems according to the most adequate available standards of truth, objectivity, and moral and aesthetic excellence.

Whatever else it might include, the human right to education may, therefore, be interpreted as a moral claim that all individuals make on their society to be provided with the opportunity for gaining an adequate general introduction to the content of the high culture, the common curriculum in the sense already indicated. What constitutes an 'adequate general introduction' would need to be determined in detail. It would set out the level of general or liberal education that it is fitting for any person to achieve. Such a program would certainly go beyond the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and an elementary knowledge of the social order to which one belongs. However, the engagement in mathematics, science, literature, and the other elements of the high culture would just as clearly not be undertaken as a basis for scholarly work, but in order to develop a broad framework for understanding, interpreting, and appreciating human life.

The providing of opportunity would have to take account of the diversity of abilities and interests affected by environment and heredity.

Ideally, each individual should be enabled to go as far towards achieving the desirable level of liberal education as his or her personal abilities and efforts will allow. In practice, the assistance that can be given will depend on the full range of claims, based on human rights and other moral grounds, that are being made on the resources of a particular society.

Although the reports of the Interim Committee and of the Schools Commission are not concerned in detail with the question of education as a human right, they do take up two crucial elements of the foregoing argument: the questions of a common culture and curriculum and of a desirable standard of educational achievement.

The former is touched on in the Commission's first report (SC, 1975 : 2.7–2.10). What we find is hardly a systematic discussion. Still, there are at least some hints of an argument hidden among the thickets of several dense and diffuse paragraphs. In summary, the report seems to favour an extensive form of educational pluralism for the purpose of reflecting and encouraging every variation of values in the society, yet it also wants the schools to provide a kind of common curriculum. Although there is no clear indication of how these objectives are to be achieved simultaneously, a clue is given in two assumptions made by the report: that the range of desirable intellectual skills can be acquired independently of any particular body of knowledge and belief; and that even when logic, mathematics, science, art and so on are the objects of schooling, their study is compatible with any framework of values.

Granted the obscurities and terseness of the report, there are nevertheless at least three points that should be made against its views on a common curriculum.

(i) The acquisition of important intellectual skills cannot be divorced from bodies of knowledge and belief or, more generally, the traditions of systematic inquiry in a culture. The report seems to treat literacy as simply a 'word game', having no integral connection with social and cultural practices. Apparently it wishes to treat all intellectual skills in an analogous fashion.

(ii) There is a limit to the tolerance which logic, mathematics and science have towards diverse value frameworks. The intellectual and moral values involved in the serious practice of public modes of thought are simply not compatible with *every* value framework. To take one conspicuous example: the tradition of critical rationality which has informed the public modes of thought in the recent history of Western culture may be valuable for human beings generally, but it is certainly not valued highly in every culture, or even by every group within western culture. In regard to the report's policy of educational pluralism, whatever the schools may be able to do to accommodate the diversity of values in the Australian society at large, they cannot consistently reflect or respect the fairly prevalent range of values that are fundamentally anti-educational. Moreover, for at least some children the 'reality' (to use the report's word) of their family background is shaped by such factors as racial or religious prejudice, superstition, crude materialism, dissension between parents, cruelty and violence. It is naive, therefore, to suggest that there should always be harmony between the values of the school and those of each child's family.

(iii) Where the report favours a common curriculum, it seems to rely mainly on a utilitarian argument. The emphasis is not placed on the intrinsic value of the activities that constitute the common curriculum or the contribution they make to the living of a worthwhile and satisfying human life, but on the pay-off they have in our society in terms of political and social power, and economic advantage. Thus the report wants everyone to become literate in standard English, not because it will enable them to gain access to the great artistic achievements of English literature or even to read serious contemporary journalism, but because it is the language in which the business of everyday life in our society is conducted (SC, 1975 : 2.10).

In regard to the question of a desirable standard of education that everyone should have the opportunity to achieve, I believe the position of the Schools Commission is more satisfactory. In each of the three documents considered, the priorities for government action in education are directly related to the task of ensuring that all members of the society reach a certain level of achievement over a range of common educational objectives. This general approach is clearly consistent with the interpretation of education as a human right suggested above. There are, however, two main qualifying comments I would make on the Commission's argument.

First, the stress seems to be placed on a *minimally* adequate educational attainment. (The first report of the Commission speaks, for example, of 'threshold levels' and a 'basic plateau of competence'). If the level of expectation has been placed too low, it is, perhaps, because of the undue weight given to instrumental criteria (such as occupational needs and social efficiency). Admittedly, the two reports of the Commission seem to go further than the report of the Interim Committee. They are, however, ambiguous on whether the kind and level of education they believe everyone should attain requires an initiation into the high culture. One basic difficulty in assessing the adequacy of what is envisaged is that none of the documents provides even a general description of the program, not even of the kind that Raymond Williams, in *The Long Revolution*, proposes for a common curriculum.[11]

Second, contrary to the Commission's belief, the policy of using public resources selectively in an effort to ensure that everyone will at least reach a certain standard of education does not depend on or necessarily promote principles of equality. If the policy succeeded, the quality of formal education for a large proportion of the society would be raised to a satisfactory level. It is possible that, for a majority of people in the society, the gap between their level of education and that of the best educated would be narrowed. Unless very able and interested students were in some way prevented from exceeding the proposed desirable standard, there would still be very significant differences in educational achievement. It is conceivable that, in a situation where everyone had the opportunity to attain at least a good standard of education, the upper limits of achievement might be advanced.

It is misleading, therefore, to speak as *Schools in Australia* does, about promoting 'a more equal basic achievement between children' (SC. Interim Committee, 1973: 2.9), or to claim, as the Commission's first report does, that the development of independent learning abilities in everyone will advance greater equality of educational outcome (SC, 1975 : 2.7).

The policy may be linked more closely with equality of opportunity than with the ideal of an egalitarian society. This is the connection that is highlighted in the Commission's second Report. It seems to me that the policy can be better defended on the grounds that were proposed above in examining education as a human right. This approach avoids the difficulties raised in the first section of this paper against using the school as an instrument of equal economic opportunity. It is also more consistent with the policy that the Commission is really advocating. The objective is not to provide everyone with an *equal* opportunity to reach the desirable level of education, but to give each individual the assistance he or she needs in order to reach that level. The objective might more accurately be described as the promotion of appropriate or sufficient opportunity.

To return finally to the general question of equality in the human right to education, it seems that equality is involved in two respects. First, stress is placed on a curriculum of general education that is the *same* for everyone in its objectives and the main features of its content and, second, every individual is held to be equally entitled to the greatest possible assistance he or she needs in order to attain the desirable educational level. Beyond these features, however, education as a human right is by no means dominated by the notion of equality. In the process of education, the right requires substantially unequal treatment of individuals according to their particular abilities, interests, and social circumstances. It does not imply that everyone will, in fact, reach the quality of liberal education considered appropriate for any human being. Nor does it prescribe that no one should go beyond this level of educational attainment. What it does require is that everyone should certainly have a sufficient opportunity of at least gaining an adequate introduction to liberal education. Education viewed as a human right has nothing to do with equality of outcome; the whole emphasis is on the responsibility of a society to ensure that, as far as possible, no one fails to gain the range and quality of education that befits the dignity of a human being.

Notes and References

[1] Australia. Schools Commission. Interim Committee. *Schools in Australia:* Report of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission, Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1973.
Schools Commission (SC), *Report for the Triennium 1976–78,* Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1975.
Schools Commission, *Report*: *Rolling Triennium, 1977–79,* Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1976.

[2] For a very critical account of the principle of equal opportunity see J.H. Schaar, Equality of opportunity and beyond, In R.J. Pennock and W. Chapman (Eds), *Equality,* New York: Atherton Press, 1967. I have discussed Schaar's position and other aspects of the principle of equal opportunity in *Education and Social Ideals,* Toronto: Longman Canada, 1973, Chapter VI. In addition to the practical difficulties in trying to achieve a social hierarchy based strictly on merit, a number of recent theorists have seriously questioned whether merit is a legitimate basis for allowing significant differences in the possession of human goods. They argue that differences in merit must depend substantially on differences in natural talents and that the latter are unmerited. See, for example, J. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice,* London: Oxford University Press, 1973, pp.103 seq.; L. Holborow, Desert, equality and injustice, *Philosophy,* 1975, **50**, 157–68; N. Daniels, Merit and meritocrary, *Philosophy and Public Affairs,* 1978, 7(3), 206–23; M. Coady, What does merit deserve? *Cambridge Journal of Education* (forthcoming).

[3] Apart from what can be done to control genetic factors, there are the complex moral questions of what ought to be done in this area.

[4] Australia. Schools Commission. Interim Committee, op.cit., p.22.

[5] A.R. Jensen, The price of inequality, *Oxford Review of Education*, 1975, **1**(1), 59–71.

[6] ibid., p.61.

[7] The recent DeFunis case in the US illustrates the legal and moral problems of applying racial quotas in the selection of applicants for educational programs. Not only does this policy attempt to offset the effects of racial discrimination by using race as a principle of selection, but as one Negro scholar (K. Clark of New York University) has noted, 'For blacks to be held to lower standards, or held to different standards, or in some cases to no standards, is a most contemptible form of racism', quoted in Maurice Cranston, Compensating for disadvantage, *The Times Higher Education Supplement*, July 9, 1976, p.14.

[8] The point is emphasized by James S. Coleman in commenting on the implications of John Rawls's theory of equality, Rawls, Nozick, and educational equality, *The Public Interest*, 1976, No. 43, 122.

[9] I have discussed the nature of the human right to education in *Education and Social Ideals*, Chapter II.

[10] Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution*. Harmondsworth Mx: Penguin Books, 1961, p.57.

[11] Williams, op.cit., pp.174–175.

Postscript

Following Peter Sheehan's comments in the Introduction (pp.23–4), I have already tried to make my position clearer on the objective of equal average educational attainment among groups by the addition of a paragraph on p.283. This does not necessarily put me beyond the reach of his criticism.

In summary, my present view may be stated in the following way. On the one hand, I agree that, when non-educationally defined groups are not proportionately represented at the various levels of educational achievement, we should look for features of schooling and the life of the society that systematically influence this outcome. When such features are subject to human control, they should be changed—provided, of course, that the benefit is not outweighed by the loss of some other good.

On the other hand, as I have indicated in Chapter 10, I have reservations about the interpretation of the policy in practice: the determination of 'non-educationally' defined groups; what groups of this kind are to count as significant for the application of the policy; the extent to which the causes of group differences come within the power of schooling;

how the policy is translated into the educational work of teachers in relation to individual learners; the amount of social engineering that may be required (e.g. How far are we to go in trying to offset the advantage that home environment apparently gives the middle class over the working class in scholastic achievement?). A more basic point, perhaps, is that most supporters of the policy seem to be preoccupied with the economic, social, and political consequences of gaining different levels of schooling. Thus, in practice, the policy not only tends to endorse fully the basic assumptions of the principle of equality of opportunity but also leaves unquestioned what schools do in the name of education and the whole business of credentialling.

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